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MOROCCAN MODERN:

RACE, AESTHETICS, AND IDENTITY IN A GLOBAL CULTURE MARKET

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MOROCCAN MODERN:

RACE, AESTHETICS, AND IDENTITY

IN A GLOBAL CULTURE MARKET

by

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Dedication

To Rachel

and Lyna, Elijah, and Noah

Acknowledgments

This project represents over a decade of coursework, research, and writing, beginning in Arkansas, Lebanon, and Ghana, and ending in Texas, Morocco, Ohio, New York, North Carolina, and Cairo. As a result, lots of people have had their hands on the spoon—stirring, adding some ingredients, suggesting others, turning up the heat, letting it simmer, and tasting and commenting on various sections and permutations. I have missed many who passed through the kitchen at one time or another, but I mention a few names here in the hopes that all will feel free to take their places around the table.

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While readers of various portions of this dissertation have tried, it would have been impossible for them to spot all of the errors in typography and in fact, lapses of judgment, injudicious emphases, misattributions, weaknesses in argument, and other faults contained herein. They did their best and should in no way be held responsible for any mistakes I have made. Instead, if anything here is found to be clearly stated or useful, it's no doubt due to the sharp eye and perceptive comment of one of my readers.

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MOROCCAN MODERN:

RACE, AESTHETICS, AND IDENTITY

IN A GLOBAL CULTURE MARKET

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This dissertation asks how conceptions of race have informed popular cultural expressions in post-independence Morocco. Further, how have these expressions helped shape Moroccan modernity? What does an analysis of the history of the Gnawa in Morocco tell us about changes in Moroccan society, including the religious landscape, and the relation of these changes to globalization? This dissertation tracks the often contradictory paths that modernity has taken in Morocco through a focus on one racialized subculture, the Gnawa, ritual musicians originally from sub-Saharan Africa who have lived in Morocco for centuries without losing a certain African identity. The first part of the dissertation assesses Blackness in Morocco, considering Moroccan history in light of its relations across the Sahara desert. I examine cultural patterns of

the Niger River region to which the Gnawa trace their origins, as well as crucial elements in the Moroccan past that involve racial formation. The second part of the dissertation considers how newcomers come to take on these new spiritual and musical identities, whether through a kind of musical transposition or an economic conversion. I argue that mass media have been central in Gnawa conversion narratives in the past, while more recent Gnawa identities have revolved around the consumption of commodities. The third section details my own conversion through a series of engagements with the Essaouira Festival of world music and Gnawa music in Morocco. I attended the festival as an informed tourist and also behind the scenes as an interested participant, and I found that the festival serves multiple purposes in Morocco's cultural economy. I conclude that Morocco's aesthetic history is deeply influenced by conceptions of race. These conceptions have in turn influenced commercial media expressions of post-independence Moroccan identities. Finally, since the opening of Moroccan society in the 1990s, the clearest expression of the future of Moroccan expressive and popular culture has been the rise of music festivals.

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INTRODUCTION

2001: A GNAWA ODYSSEY

In 2001, on my first trip to Morocco, I attended the Gnawa festival in Essaouira almost upon arrival. I had visited my family for a few weeks in Ghana, and then I was invited to a conference in Gothenburg, Sweden for a few days, my first (and, so far, only) visit to Sweden. And so I was feeling very cosmopolitan as I passed through Amsterdam's Schiphol airport for the third time in six weeks on my way to Casablanca.

I arrived at the Casablanca airport late on a Sunday evening and spent the remainder of that night in a hotel near the Casablanca train station before catching the morning train to Fes with all my bags. The train arrived around 3 p.m. I took a taxi to the language school where I would be taking classes after the festival and dropped off my bags, looking to return soon to begin my first instruction in Moroccan Arabic. I had studied Modern Standard Arabic in Lebanon, and I knew Moroccans read it because of the Arabic newspapers and magazines I saw everywhere. It was thus very disappointing to learn how useless it was to be verbally competent in MSA in Morocco. After dropping off my bags I had four hours to kill until the evening train to Marrakech, so I went to order a cup of tea at a cafe in Fes. I found that I couldn't even do that competently, since I ordered "shay" and was directed by a mocking waiter to ask for "thé," while the other customers laughed too. I later learned that the Moroccan Arabic word for tea is *at-tay*. I also found out that young Americans speaking formal Arabic in that neighborhood formed a running joke among local cafe patrons.

I changed my Swedish crowns into Moroccan dirhams and headed for the train station. That evening I caught the all-night train to Marrakech. On the train I read Salman Rushdie's novel *The Moor's Last Sigh* until I fell asleep. I awoke at dawn to a stark panorama outside my east-facing train window—a huge red sun rising over a rocky cactus desert—and thought for a few minutes that I was in north India. The memory of that impression lingered for days.

At the Marrakech train station I got a taxi to the bus station and caught the bus to Essaouira at around 6:30. At 11 am on the second morning of my first trip to Morocco, I arrived in the small tourist city of Essaouira. I found a hotel in the madina, the old city, that could take me only for that night, so I had to spend a few more hours searching for another hotel. I finally located one a mile down the beach that would take me for the full festival period. I began hunting for contacts that Ted Swedenburg had made two summers before, when he had gone to the festival. Ted, a former professor, had given me photographs to distribute to friends he had made. With the help of a shop owner, I found Najib Sudani, the son of one of Essaouira's premier Gnawa m'allims who had recently passed away. I sat with Najib in his shop for a bit and chatted, but I had real trouble communicating with him due to his lisp, missing teeth, and more colloquial Moroccan register and pronunciation. I walked around the corner, looking for the music shop Ted had told me about, and I recognized Muhammad and Ahmad from the pictures. I found them easier to understand, especially Muhammad, since they a higher level of education and thus had access to a more formal register of Arabic. All

three remembered “Dedd” fondly and accepted with pleasure the pictures he had sent with me.

It was still a few days before the concerts began, so I sat in that music shop sampling what Muhammad and Ahmad were listening to and observing what their customers were buying. I bought a large number of cassettes as well, making myself useful by redistributing my summer grant funding in a way that benefited all of us. My unnecessarily fancy hotel included breakfasts and dinners; I snacked for lunch most days. One day Muhammad invited me to his home for a traditional Moroccan lunch of couscous. He introduced me to his family, including his wife and his three daughters. His oldest daughter was just finishing her secondary schooling, in a French school, and he had two younger girls, the youngest around nine or ten. The food tasted so good! I had been disappointed thus far in the Moroccan cuisine I had encountered in the hotel. Their warm welcome led me to feel as though I could survive in Morocco. Otherwise, in those early days of Wednesday through Friday, I sat in shops and cafes talking with people about music and Gnawa.

Soon after that, my experience transformed rapidly. More people began arriving, including anthropologists Deborah Kapchan and Jonathan Shannon. They were due to present at an academic conference associated with the festival, which highlighted the music of the Gnawa. The Gnawa are descendants of sub-Saharan slaves who were brought to Morocco from West Africa in past centuries. The contributors were speaking on slavery, forced migration, Africa, and music. Deborah was my new PhD advisor. We

had socialized together a few times the previous year, and in the spring I had taken a class taught by Jonathan as an adjunct faculty member at UT-Austin. The conference was being held at a large tourist hotel, but not the large tourist hotel identified in the official program. (Deborah and Jonathan were staying at a third large hotel, several miles from town, with other conference attendees, academics from the United States, Canada, and Europe.)

That Friday, the first day of the conference, I was wandering around the listed hotel trying to find the conference, when I ran into a man who was similarly frustrated. I found I could communicate perfectly with him in Standard Arabic because, as a journalist, he was required to speak that variety of Arabic comfortably and fluently. We walked together to the other hotel. When we got there, he began interviewing attendees for his story, while I went in and sat down. Presenting that afternoon at the conference was Tim Abdellah Fuson, an American graduate student in ethnomusicology who had been conducting long-term fieldwork on the Gnawa of Marrakech, the major city of southern Morocco and, along with Essaouira, one of the central cities for Gnawa music. After the afternoon session I joined Tim on the walk back to the main part of town. He was staying with friends in a rented apartment in the madina, graduate students in ethnomusicology and anthropology at French universities. We hung out in cafes and talked for a bit—their Arabic was nearly as bad as my French, so we had some difficulty communicating.

Over the weekend I attended lectures and socialized with Muhammad and Ahmad during the day and went to concerts during the evenings with American and Canadian academics. I even attended some of the tourist lilas, which began after midnight. One of them Saturday night was held in the courtyard of a two-story building. Hundreds of people packed the central area. I found a spot on the balcony. The musicians were on an elevated stage at the far end of the space, before a line of trees. Barricades and police officers were in place to keep the audience away from the performers. Every so often, though, a member of the audience—almost always female—would go into trance. Some of those standing around the trancing woman held on to her as she whipped her head around; others got out of the way. She was slowly guided, trancing all the while, through the audience to the stage, where the police let her behind the barricades. An old man on stage brought a veil and the incense brazier, and she tranced before the musicians for a few minutes, rocking back and forth or whipping her head around in circles, her head and shoulders covered with the veil, as she inhaled the incense from the brazier. At the climax of the song, she collapsed, whereupon women came and half-carried her to a space behind the stage to recover.

Sunday morning I went back to the conference, and then went late to meet with Najib to buy a *ginbri* from him. He owned a workshop that produced the *ginbri* (also known as *hajhuj* or *sintir*), the large wooden bass lute that is the primary ritual instrument of Gnawa music.

I wanted an authentic ginbri, with its body hewn from a single piece of wood about eight inches across, 20 inches long, and six inches deep, hollow across the front. A wooden pole about two inches thick and 15 inches long was attached to one end of the body, which had a thick camel skin stretched across the front. Three sheep-gut strings were secured to the base of the body and stretched over a light wooden bridge. These strings stretched up to the "neck" of the pole to the "headstock," where they were attached to leather straps wound tightly around the pole. Two strings were attached closer to the end of the pole. These two, typically tuned to C and F, were fingered on the fretless "fingerboard" of the pole, producing other tones in a pentatonic scale. The third string, a shorter drone, tended to be tuned to a constant G. It took a long time to select and buy my ginbri. Najib also showed me how to tune it, which involved estimating the string lengths and then tugging and straining on the leather straps. (Later ginbri teachers alleged that he had done so wrongly, but it was more likely my own limitations that prevented me from learning how to tune it competently.) I later learned that it is not uncommon for the tuner to brace one or even both feet against the ginbri's body in order pull hard enough on the leather straps. But I missed the afternoon concert by Algerian rai superstar Cheb Mami on the main stage. I hung out with Deborah and Jonathan that evening at their hotel. Monday morning I caught a shared taxi to Marrakech.

All in all, my 2001 experience was a bit overwhelming. I couldn't understand very much, and I tried to participate in as much as possible. The concerts I found

disappointing, for the most part. The Gnawa music was nice, but the collaborations seemed forced and not very well planned or executed. I later learned that such failures are typical for the Essaouira festival, and not necessarily a bad thing. According to Victor Turner, "a celebratory performance rejoices in the key values and virtues of the society that produces it, and in a history whose high points of success and conquest (or even noble failure) exemplify qualities of moral and aesthetic excellence" (1982:14). The collaborations might have been failures, but with such virtuoso musicians, what noble failures they were.

What I found most striking, however, was the popular nature of the festival. The streets were filled with strange-looking people, it's true—dreadlocks, spikes, leather, hemp clothing, scantily clad tourists, and the like—but the vast majority of the crowds were composed of ordinary-looking Moroccan extended families. There were grandmothers in scarves and veils and fancy glasses, keeping up with toddlers and young children. Young parents pushed strollers; teenagers acted badly and were scolded by middle-aged moms and dads. Some families camped in tents or slept in their cars and vans on the beach. Some of these vehicles were driven by Moroccans but bore European license plates, which means that they were owned Moroccans who lived and worked abroad and who were on vacation back in Morocco. Many more vehicles bore Moroccan plates, driven by middle-class Moroccan families visiting temperate Essaouira from one of the big, hot cities of the interior or from the coastal cities of Casablanca or Rabat. The festival was a middle-class social event. But why did all these

people come to Essaouira? There are many festivals in Morocco and many other ways for families to spend their leisure time. Why come to the festival that celebrates Morocco's local Black musical tradition?

This dissertation asks how conceptions of race have informed popular cultural expressions in post-independence Morocco. Further, how have these expressions helped shape Moroccan modernity? The dissertation focuses primarily on the Gnawa, a group of Moroccans who share a spiritual and musical identity and who trace a common heritage with sub-Saharan West Africans enslaved and brought to Morocco between 1100 and 1900. The first part of the dissertation assesses Blackness in Morocco, considering Moroccan history in light of its relations across the Sahara desert. I examine cultural patterns of the Niger River region to which the Gnawa trace their origins, as well as crucial elements in the Moroccan past that involve racial formation. The second section of the dissertation considers how newcomers come to take on these new spiritual and musical identities, whether through a kind of musical transposition or an economic conversion. I argue that mass media have been central in Gnawa conversion narratives in the past, while more recent Gnawa identities have revolved around the consumption of everyday commodities. The third section details my own conversion through a series of engagements with the Essaouira Festival of world music and Gnawa music in Morocco, an engagement whose beginning I have outlined above. I attended the festival as an informed tourist and also behind the scenes as an interested participant, and I found that the festival serves multiple purposes in Morocco's cultural

economy. I conclude that Morocco's aesthetic history is deeply influenced by conceptions of race. These conceptions have in turn influenced commercial media expressions of post-independence Moroccan identities. Finally, since the opening of Moroccan society since the 1990s, the clearest expression of the future of Moroccan expressive and popular culture has been the rise of music festivals.

GNAWA TRADITIONAL

Gnawa scholar and anthropologist Bertrand Hell has completed the most holistic and exhaustive description of the traditional Gnawa ceremony (Hell 2002). In his study, he shows how the Gnawa form a popular religious fraternity like the Hamadsha (Crapanzano 1973), the 'Issawa, and other groups. These religious orders inhabit a position toward the bottom of the religious world in Morocco, below the great Sufi orders (*tariqas*), and separate from orthodox Muslim impulses which are often more pietistic, including the so-called *salafiyya* movements, which seek to emulate seventh-century Islam. Like in the Sufi orders, in Gnawa bands (*taifas*) the focus is on ritual practice. However, the Gnawa are separated from the *tariqas* and even from the Hamadsha, 'Issawa, and the like because the Gnawa do not have any central authority, defining text, or chain of transmission of a heritage through the centuries. Instead, the Gnawa are made up of these local groups of *taifas* that associate with each other and gather together under a common heritage of enslavement.

The Gnawa consider themselves to be the descendants of sub-Saharan Africans who were enslaved in West Africa and then brought to Morocco across the Sahara Desert on foot. They maintain a memory of that passage that is evident in their songs. For example, one Gnawa song details the injustices of enslavement (here, "Sudan" refers to the archaic "Western Sudan" or central West Africa, now Senegal, Mali, and Niger; *bilad al-sudan* is Arabic for "land of the Blacks"):

> They brought from the Sudan
> The nobles of this country brought us
> They brought us to serve them
> They brought us to bow to them
> They brought us
> Oh there is no God but God
> We believe in God's justice.
>
> (El Hamel 2008:256)

Another song mourns the lost homeland:

> The Sudan, oh! Sudan
> The Sudan, the land of my people
> I was enslaved, I was sold,
> I was taken away from my loved ones.
>
> (El Hamel 2008:256)

Although many Gnawa leaders are darker-skinned than most Moroccans, not all, or perhaps not even a majority of Gnawa, might be perceived by non-Moroccans as "Black." Nevertheless, the legacy of enslavement is a commonly voiced point of unity for Gnawa. Thus they form a group that shares a common heritage and a common mythical homeland south of the Sahara Desert. Despite this heritage, however, the most basic means for identifying Gnawa is as a religious group or order. Membership in a group derives from an initiation into the group, and a group's leaders must display some sort of proficiency over the group's knowledge, beliefs, and practices. Certain of these beliefs and practices are distinct within Moroccan popular religion. The two primary elements among these are a fundamentally adorcist approach to spirit possession, and an all-night ceremony called a lila. The songs that are performed during the lila form the primary route of access for interested outsiders to learn about the group.

Adorcism is a belief that possessing spirits should not be rejected but rather accepted and appeased. It is the opposite of exorcism. Almost uniquely in Morocco, the Gnawa are strong adorcists. Spirits, called *jinn* more generally in the Muslim world and *mluk* by the Gnawa, are mentioned in the Quran. Many Moroccans and other Muslims fear *jinn* and try to avoid contact with them. Moreover, many Moroccans believe in the existence of saintly spirits. At least, they recognize the existence of material and substantive blessing given by God to a saint, known as *baraka*, which can be shared to an adept through interaction with the descendants of the saint or by visiting a sacred site associated with the saint. Pilgrimage to these sites forms a basis for much that has been

termed “Moroccan Islam.” The Gnawa subsume both of these kinds of spirits—saintly spirits as well as *jinn*—into a larger category that they call *mluk*, possessing spirits that can come upon a person for numerous reasons. For example, one person might be possessed by ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, an Iranian jurist and orthodox theologian who died in Baghdad in 1166 C.E.; meanwhile, another person might be possessed by Aisha Qandisha, the terrifying camel-footed “she-demon” who seduces men in the dark and binds them to her, who threatens the life and health of small babies. Whereas other religious traditions in Morocco tend to try to exorcise a possessing spirit, the Gnawa believe that the spirit could possibly be a permanent resident in an afflicted person’s body. Rather than seeking to oust the spirit, a Gnawa leader tries instead to identify the spirit properly, with the aim of appeasing him or her. This process of identifying the specific spirit that is afflicting a person is usually the primary goal of a lila ceremony. The secondary goal involves determining how to appease the spirit.

Lila (or “leela”) means “night,” and the lila ceremony takes place at night, either in an entire night from the late evening to dawn, as is the case in southern Morocco and Rabat, or spread across three nights, as tends to be the case in northern Morocco. A ceremony will be scheduled before-hand by the main person who needs healing. He or she will take the responsibility of organizing it, usually with the help of a *mqaddim* (male) or *mqaddima* (female), the religious professional who officiates at the ceremony. The *mqaddim* knows the names of the spirits and their attributes and typical desires. Together, the afflicted person and the *mqaddim* engage a *m’allim* or master musician,

always a man, who heads a troupe of three more musicians. These musicians play three principal instruments: *ginbri*, *qraqib*, and *tbel*. The single *ginbri*, also known as *hajhuj* or *sintir*, the large bass lute mentioned above, is principally played by the m'allim and, during some songs, by one of the senior members of the troupe. It is held like a guitar, fingered on the neck by the left hand and strummed by the right. The method of playing resembles a "slap bass" style—the thumb and forefinger pluck and strike the strings, while the other three fingers drum on the camel-skin cover (the equivalent of the soundboard of a guitar). Thus the instrument produces both tone and rhythm. Sometimes a rattle in inserted into the end of the "headstock," producing a snare effect. The *qraqib* (sing. *qarqaba*), two paired sets of large metal castanets, are played in unison by all the junior members of the troupe, who usually number three to six players. The *qraqib* tend to be around 10 inches long, shaped like barbells and cupped at the larger ends. A paired set is linked at one end with a metal staple; they are free at the other end. Leather straps attached to each neck are looped around the thumb and the first two fingers, to help pull the free end apart quickly after clapping it. The two paired sets are clapped alternately, one by each hand, in double and triple rhythms, in response to the rhythms played on the *ginbri*. The *tbel*, a large bass drum, is played at the beginning of the ceremony.

Once an official offer has been accepted and a date set, then other members of the *taifa* as well as other Gnawa might decide to attend. A lila can be expensive, and while the initial cost is borne by the person requesting the ceremony, there is the idea

that the total cost will eventually be shared by the entire community. This is usually done so through donations during the course of the ceremony. After a specific song has been played, some members of the audience respond by donating money in exchange for the blessing the receive. The greater the blessing, the greater the number of donors for that song. (The amount of a single donation tends to be fixed, at 10 or 20 dirhams.) As a result, a better performance that involves a more successful ceremony can cause a greater amount to be raised and directed toward paying off the initial investment, after the musicians are paid. Money can also be raised by auctioning off various ritual items used during the ceremony.

Over the course of the night or series of nights, a number of musical suites are played. Before these more "instrumental" songs are played, however, there is the welcoming ceremony, followed by the more "expressive" *fraja* ("entertainment") songs. The welcoming ceremony begins outside of the house where the ceremony is to take place. The drums are played very loudly and a song of welcome is sung. This ceremony not only welcomes any hearer who wishes to attend, but it is also directed toward any spirits that might be inhabiting hearers within earshot. After beginning in the street, the troupe enters the home and continues to drum and sing for a few minutes. Then the *tbel* is laid aside and not used again, and the *fraja* songs begin. The *fraja* songs are marked by virtuoso and athletic dances by the members of the troupe.

After these two introductory sections are completed, there is usually a break of 30 minutes—or much longer—before the possession suites begin, usually around

midnight. The possession suites correspond to the broad groupings of spirits, which are identified by color. Although the number of groupings tends to vary, Bertrand Hell (2002) determines a typical number of groupings for Marrakech to be seven. Each of the seven pantheons of spirits has a unique suite of songs, a main color, and a specific incense. Hell further divides the spirits into two broad groupings, the white and the black. The white, or "Muslim" spirits, are those that belong to the White, Red, Green, and Blue pantheons. The black, or "African" spirits, fall into the Yellow, Multi-Colored, and Black pantheons. Hell further distinguishes the "First Black spirits" from the "Second Black spirits," which come later in the ceremony and are even more dangerous than the Yellow, Multi-Colored, and First Black spirits.

Determining the precise identities of the possessing spirits is the paramount goal of the ceremony, particularly for those people who are afflicted but whose possessing spirit has not been identified. The spirit al-Jilani, the Standard Bearer, knows all the spirits and helps in this process. The easiest spirits to identify are those of the White, Red, Green, and Blue pantheons, which are never *jinn*, even though all the *mluk* are difficult to control and provoke ambivalence among the Gnawa. The really fearful jinn, however, are those of the other pantheons, the Yellow, Multicolored, and Black. These are associated with Baba Mimun, the guardian of the Gnawa, who is known as the "Master of the Doors to the Sudan" (Hell 2002:141) and who is a member of the First Black pantheon. The White spirits are associated with birth. The Multi-Colored spirits represent the wandering hermit, voluntarily poor and poorly fed but on a holy quest for

wisdom. The First Black spirits are those of blacksmithing and forging, representing the fire of knowledge. Other key First Black spirits include Lala Mimuna the Gnawiyya and al-Ghumami or "the Stormy." Al-Ghumami, "Master of the Sword," is "the most dreadful avatar of Baba Mimun" (Hell 2002:173). When those who are possessed by Ghumami dance, they cut themselves with knives, more violently than those who are possessed by al-Jilani. The Blue spirits (associated with water, sea, and sky) and the Red Spirits (blood) represent the vital bodily fluids, while the Green spirits are Muslim saints. Many of the songs from the Green suite are keyed to an "oriental mode," in contrast to the rest of the songs, which tend to be in a pentatonic scale.[1] A well-known Blue spirit is Sidi Musa, the spirit of the biblical Moses, associated with water because he parted the Red Sea and led the Israelites across on dry land, and he later struck the stone and caused it to yield a spring. The Second Black spirits, the *awlad ghaba* or "Sons of the Forest," represent the wilderness and wild animals. Their key spirit is Bala Bala Dima, the Great Serpent. Following through the door opened by Baba Mimun, these spirits are more ferocious and aggressive than the First Blacks (Hell 2002:250). Many of them are nameless wild animals. Finally, the Yellow spirits represent rebirth and feminine sweetness and laughter, and they share a taste for sugar, pretty ornaments, bright colors, sweet perfume, and gracious dance. They practice seduction and value sensual pleasure. An early dance involves overturning a plate of sweets, which elicits a

[1] Thanks to Tim Abdellah Fuson for pointing this out.

mad scramble for them, the audience laughing and pushing on all fours. The Yellow spirits come at the end of the cycle, at dawn, the rebirth of the day.

Often newcomers to the ceremony do not know which spirit has possessed them, or even whether they are possessed, so those around them who are more experienced tend watch for signs that they might be entering into trance—for example, a person might begin to rock slowly and then more vigorously, ending up in a trance state. Or a person might go suddenly rigid and need to be carried to the dance space. People who already know their possessing spirit might make their way to the dance space when their spirit's song begins. Sometimes the occasion of the lila is the first hint of a new possessing spirit, and so a member might be prepared for a later possession, but be taken by surprise at an unexpected possession. In any case, once the possessing spirit takes over, the person is led to the dance space, where he or she is covered with a veil of the appropriate color, and the brazier with the appropriate incense is presented, so that the person in trance can inhale the smoke. The possessed person then dances, often with someone not in trance assisting him or her. Usually men assist other men and women assist other women, but this is not always the case. While women are dancing, they often remove their veils and swing their hair freely in a large circle. This image is visually arresting, particularly for outsiders. As such, it forms one of the most symbolically charged images of the Gnawa ceremony, sparking intense debates among supporters and opponents of the Gnawa over liberation versus license. A particularly intense possession might extend for several minutes or even 20 or 30 minutes, the

person dancing alone immediately before the *m'allim*, who must continue to play, as the possessing spirit continues to demand that the song not stop. In such cases the spirit is considered to be communing directly with the *ginbri*.

Outside of the ceremony, male Gnawa musicians are highly visible on the street. They can be seen in residential as well as commercial districts, usually in pairs (one with a *tbel*, the other with *qraqib*) but sometimes alone, dispensing blessings from door to door and from passerby. A Gnawa musician in this public role usually wears sandals, traditional trousers, and a tunic of red, green, or black cloth, often with a belt and sash covered with cowry shells. He also tends to wear a fez, also decorated with cowries, to which a tassel has been attached on a string. As he plays his *qraqib*, dances, and sings songs from the *fraja* suites, he moves his head so as to keep the tassel spinning around continuously. A song will tend to end with a flourish, perhaps with the dancer leaping high, followed by a deep bow. He then removes his hat and presents it for a donation. If a donation is given, the dancer will often recite a series of blessings over the donor's life, family, possessions, etc.

Tension exists between interpreting such encounters variously as spiritual service provided to the public, as begging, and as spiritual extortion. In addition to the reality that most Gnawa musicians inhabit a position close to the bottom of Morocco's socioeconomic ladder, such encounters—perhaps the closest an outsider may ever come to first-hand experience with Gnawa beliefs and practices—may account for many of the negative impressions of Gnawa by non-Gnawa Moroccans. When I first got to

Morocco, I would seek out such Gnawa performing publicly and try to talk with them. I usually learned that most of them were visitors in the city, on a holy pilgrimage, who were staying long enough to make enough money to move on. Later, as I tried to go about my everyday business, especially if I was in a hurry, I would avoid such encounters. I would take a different street if I could hear *qraqib* playing ahead of me. I would also speed up or slow down, suddenly get interested in a shop window, or create an animated conversation with a companion—anything to avoid getting sucked into the high-pressure sales tactics of the Gnawa. In Tangier, I tended to recognize the dancers in the street, because visiting Gnawa pilgrims tended to end up at Dar Gnawa at some point. I would often leave a cafe to go and chat for a few minutes. Waiters and acquaintances tended to be horrified when I did so.

GNAWA MODERN

Exceptions abound to the above description of what is signified by the word *gnawa*. In this section, I hope to complicate these accepted stereotypes as a means of showing Gnawa beliefs and practices to be dynamic and fluid. I first met Gnawa m'allim Abdellah El Gourd later during the summer of 2001. Halfway through my language course I traveled to Tangier to visit Deborah Kapchan there. She had been interviewing Abdellah for a project and invited me along on a visit. Abdellah was a short, powerfully built man with dark brown skin and a thick white beard. I later learned that it was prematurely white—at the time he was 58, a year younger than my own

father, of whom Abdellah reminded me. I was still speaking what appeared to Moroccan ears to be Arabic in a formal register: After inviting us to sit down and offering us tea, Abdellah started speaking to me in precise and correct formal Arabic, but very quickly. I stumbled a bit in my response. I guess I looked like I was panicking, because he suddenly grinned and said, "Relax, man! Speak English!"

Abdellah's spoken English occasionally gave evidence of his early years socializing with African-American jazz musicians a generation older than he, who were living in or visiting Tangier during the 1960s, when Abdellah was a young man. Pianist Randy Weston in particular was an early friend—Weston's training under Thelonius Monk and others in Harlem in the 1950s explained Abdellah's occasional but comfortable use of a distinct variety of African-American vernacular English. As the interview continued, Deborah asked Abdellah to show us his *luha*, a large chart containing an outline of the entire Gnawa lila. The chart, hand written, held the titles of 243 Gnawa songs and the ceremonial order in which they came. In 2006, Abdellah told me that from the 1960s to the 1980s he had spent his weekends traveling around the country incognito, participating in lilas and learning the songs of other Gnawa traditions, "learning their knowledge," as he liked to put it. This *luha* was a representation of his own knowledge of the Northern Gnawa tradition. The item became an object for Kapchan to pursue (Kapchan 2002a, 2007). Abdellah never permitted it to be copied, neither by someone copying the names of the songs by hand nor by taking

close-up photographs. He seemed to guard it as a valuable piece of intellectual property, but it was not for sale at any price.

I visited Tangier briefly in 2002, but I did not return there to live until February 2006. In February and March, during Tangier's only intemperate season, cold rain fell often enough to keep us huddled in a small room in Abdellah's home when we met. There were no tourists and few important visitors during this time. Instead, Abdellah gave his days over to educating the younger initiates, while he spent his evenings conversing with his friends and members of his troupe. He had two younger initiates whom he was "working." By other m'allims, this was done informally and verbally, in conversations. However, since Abdellah and his students were all working-class or lower-middle-class, literate and accustomed to learning through reading and writing, Abdellah had decided to write down his knowledge. This would permit the initiates study the written text and copy it by hand, along the way to memorizing it, learning this knowledge as they had engaged other kinds of knowledge at school.

This method struck me at the time as simultaneously conservative and innovative: Abdellah the Gnawa *m'allim* ("master musician") had taken up the role of a *mu'allim* ("master teacher") in a quranic school, who teaches the Qur'an to students using writing and memorization. At the same time, never before had a m'allim taken the time to write down Gnawa knowledge. It was revolutionary. I asked for a copy of his book when he was done, so I could translate into English. He was honored, he said, but

he told me that other people had also asked him for the book, and he just wasn't done yet. He let me read from it, but he wouldn't let me take it home or copy it.

At the same time that Abdellah was proclaiming the value of his cultural products while resisting any monetary realization of that value, he was well into a full-fledged second career performing on stages in North America and Europe. Between 1965 and 1991 he had worked as a mechanic and electrician for the Voice of America, maintaining the generators that powered the broadcasting station south of Tangier. When new generators were installed in 1991, his skills became obsolete, and so he had retired with a full pension from the US government. It was then, financially secure at the age of 44, that he began to consider a new career as a professional musician. In the fifteen years since then, Abdellah had toured all over Europe, North American, and the Mediterranean. His performances abroad, often before elite audiences, nearly always involved a Question-&-Answer session before or after the performance. Abdellah told me that he considered these Q&A sessions to be the most stressful period of any performance, the most physically and emotionally taxing. The sessions were a kind of performance in themselves: During the sessions, Abdellah would translate his knowledge into English, French, Spanish, or Modern Standard Arabic, providing digestible synopses of very complicated performances and their even more complicated meanings. He "cooked" these sessions for the particular requirements of that audience, whether it was French or African-American jazz enthusiasts, Tunisian intelligentsia,

Spanish small-town festival attendees, German school children, or any other of the diverse audiences before which he has performed.

Elsewhere, I point up the apparent contradiction between protecting one's cultural heritage while simultaneously publicizing it widely. However, at this point I wish to underscore the "modernity" of holding both positions. I propose that a similar perspective with regard to capitalism is emblematic in the aesthetics of late modernity. Before we engage further with modernity, however, it is necessary to understand better where the Gnawa came from and how they came to hold the position they do in Moroccan popular culture. Doing so demands we examine the history of exchanges across the Sahara desert between Morocco and the societies of sub-Saharan Africa.

SECTION I: HISTORY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

ACROSS THE SAHARA

INTRODUCTION

Conceptions of race in Morocco bear a long history of interactions with Black people from sub-Saharan Africa. The history of the Gnawa is connected to the history of slavery in Morocco, which is further implicated in the history of Morocco's interactions with West Africa. Below, I begin with a discussion of Gnawa origins in West Africa. Slaves were brought across the Sahara for nearly 900 years, and I begin with a reiteration of medieval Moroccan history, focusing on slavery and racial formation. I have chosen to focus particular attention, however, on the period of heightened conquest and forced migration, between 1591 and the middle of the nineteenth century. I have done so because this period saw tremendous expansion in the one-way trade in Black slaves north across the desert. After the historical synthesis, I try to synthesize Western scholarship on the Gnawa. This scholarship was conducted with certain biases in favor of assigning a unique West African character to Gnawa members. While this bias is not necessarily incorrect, much of the early scholarship does seem to assume a "salvage" task of discovering "survivals" of African traditional religion, "essential and primal" qualities that have been "hidden under a veneer" of Islam, so to speak. Later scholars of the Gnawa have tried to broaden the conversation as a means of correcting this bias, and I document these efforts since the 1990s. Finally, I conclude

with a study of ethnography in West Africa and Morocco. Throughout this section, I am driven by the question: What is the role of race in popular culture and the public imaginary in Morocco? In the following analysis of the history of the Gnawa in Morocco, I am primarily interested in how changes in Moroccan society, including changes in the religious landscape, have taken place under the conditions of capitalist globalization.

Chapter 1: History of Blackness and Slavery in Morocco

> The world of our fathers resides within us. Ten thousand generations and more. A form without a history has no power to perpetuate itself. What has no past can have no future. At the core of our life is the history of which it is composed and in that core are no idioms but only the act of knowing and it is this we share in dreams and out. (Cormac McCarthy, *Cities of the Plain*)

In the *Theses on the Philosophy*, Walter Benjamin famously describes *Angelus Novus*, an avant-garde watercolor of an angel. He bought the painting in 1921, soon after Paul Klee painted it, and he carried it with him until his death in 1940. Benjamin interpreted the angel through at least two other alternative readings in the 1920s and 1930s (Jackson 2004); it was not until January of 1940, as Nazi armies were preparing for the invasion of France later that year, that Benjamin arrived at his ultimate reading. This time, he pictured history as an angel staring back in horror at the storm blowing from the origin of life, from Paradise. Despite the angel's desire to stop and fix things, he finds himself carried backward by the storm, his wings fixed open by its force: "This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress" (Benjamin 1968:257-258).

The moment of modernity creates lapses in historical memory, as everything old becomes new or at least newly perceived. At the same time, however, even though memory might have lapsed, the events that contributed to it continue to exert a power to determine the objective social and material conditions that we perceive as reality. The rhythm of history is conceived by Juan Flores (2000), using the ideas of Johannes Fabian (1998), as a sequence of "moments of freedom": conditions under which social relations across boundaries are achieved. "Catching" these moments—documenting them ethnographically—demands an "art of timing" in Michel de Certeau's (1984) words. The art of timing is a skill necessary both to enact meaningful cultural practices (by musicians, for example) and to comprehend, document, and analyze them (by scholars, perhaps) (Flores 2000:21). This is a historically bound art, in the sense of historical memory as imagination, as a sequence of remembered events, actions, and conditions, and as "the association of social experiences through and in time by means of interpretive recognition and recollection" (23). There are many ways to discuss history and memory with regard to Morocco. Here, I offer a consideration of Moroccan modernity in light of Morocco's relations across the Sahara Desert, relations that have encouraged Moroccans to identify themselves as Africans and with Africa.

The art of timing with which this project is concerned speaks to the moment Gnawa music inhabits in modernity, a condition and a period of articulation into a global capitalist system. Because Gnawa ideologies and practices have so recently captured popular and scholarly attention, it is necessary to describe and understand

them. This moment is wrapped up in discussions and debates over Africanness, the Black Atlantic, Islam and modernity, the respatialization of West Africa, and the terms of interaction between people and between ideologies that well reflects Stuart Hall's (1980) definition of articulation in all its forms. According to Hall, articulation can refer to the act of "giving voice" to something once silenced; to the relationship between ideology and social and material reality; and finally, in the sense I proposed earlier, to the terms of the relationship between the music and the market. All of these articulations are bound in time and determined by history. Studying the landscape of definitional struggles has been pointed up as a necessary step in avoiding the uncritical acceptance of "globalization" and other essentialisms (Tsing 2002:474-475).

ORIGINS AND ETYMOLOGIES

The origin of the word *gnawa* continues to puzzle scholars. I argue that the original pronunciation of "ghana" was "gana," and that Arab scholars used a *ghayn* (voiced velar fricative, similar to the "French *r*") because of the Arabic script's lack of a conclusive means to represent the "hard g." This helps explain why Arabic speakers continue to perceive such a huge leap from *ghana* to *gnawa*, one that is not so evident to non-Arabic and non-French speakers. Despite continued ambivalence (e.g., El Hamel 2008), this conclusion seems to me to name the word's likely origin, based on Arabic transliteration patterns. The sound used in *gnawa*, "hard g" as in golf, presents problems of transliteration into Arabic orthographies. Standard Arabic has no symbol for the

sound, and as a result typically uses the *kaf* symbol with three dots or a line above it to signify this sound when needed to transliterate other languages. A unique feature of Colloquial Egyptian Arabic, however, pronounces all incidences of the letter *jeem* as "geem." Since Egypt comes on the route from Arabia to Morocco and West Africa, we can trace something of an orthographic shift as well. This particular phonological substitution is not commonly evident in Colloquial Moroccan Arabic, but it can be found. For example, *ijlis* (in Modern Standard Arabic, the imperative "sit") becomes *glis* in CMA. It thus seems appropriate to postulate that a *geem* or a *jeem* could be transliterated as a *kaf* or a *ghayn*—and vice versa—through the vagaries of local pronunciation and orthographic inconsistencies of transliteration. Moreover, if the Soninke phonology has been reasonably consistent over the past 1000 years, we can see that the voiced velar fricative (i.e., *ghayn*) does not exist in modern Soninke, the modern form of the language of the ancient West African civilization of Ghana. We can thus propose that the ancient Ghanaians, like the modern ones, probably pronounced the word *gana*.[2] As a result, the word *Gnawa* is most likely derived from the word *Gana*

[2] Due to some limitations of the Arabic and Roman alphabets, here is some slippage between the *gh*, *g*, and *j* sounds. Although most Arabs pronounce "ghana" with a *gh*, a sound not very different from the "French *r*," the citizens of present-day Ghana pronounce the word *gana*, with a "hard *g*." Admittedly, present-day Ghana is geographically, historically, ethnically, and linguistically distant from ancient Ghana. Nevertheless, Trimingham (1959) transcribes the name of the ancient city as *Gana*. Were I to pursue this line of inquiry further, I might find that the words *Ghana*, *Jenne*, *Gnawa*, and *Guinea* all share a common root that has particular resonance in some language once or still spoken along the northern bend of the Niger River, most probably Soninke. Hell (2002:75) notes that the term could have come from the word *Ghana*, since the citizens of Ghana "were known to Arab authors of the twelfth century as the Djinawa." But Hell considers numerous alternative origins as well. He points to the Bambara *gnahua*, the name of a West African guardian spirit; the Arabic *djennawa*, the name of the inhabitants of Djenné, the Songhay capital; the Chleuh Berber term *igri ignawan* (citing Paques 1978), which refers to the star Aldebaran; and finally the Touareg word *gunawiya*, which refers to black slaves and allegedly comes

and signifies the people of Ghana. After the demise of that civilization, the term was still used in Morocco to refer to people from that region, exactly as "Farangi" and other similar words used throughout the Middle East and Asia to refer to Western Europeans have far outlived the Frankish state of Charlemagne.

Etymology is an academic question, but it signals a larger, related question that is not merely academic. Statements about etymologies speak to debates over the primary identifications the group makes with regard to its origins. It seems reasonable to assume that arguments supporting a Berber origin or a Soninke origin of the word are attempting a subtler argument concerning the place of Gnawa in Moroccan society. Are they originally from Morocco? Are they originally from the Arab lands? Are they originally from West Africa? How can statements about these origins lend themselves to arguments concerning their position today? The answers to such questions typically involve secondary assumptions concerning Islam and orthodoxy. Hell's unwillingness to commit to an exclusively sub-Saharan origin is important, because it also reflects what he calls a "double filiation" among the Gnawa. Within the ceremonial Gnawa context, the two broad groupings of Gnawa spirits, Black Spirits and White Spirits, are

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from the Berber root *gnu*, "to sew," and thus *gnuwa*, "sewn up," a reference to the fact that slaves were not permitted to speak. Chouki El Hamel (2008) argues that the Berber word is primary, but he fails to furnish enough evidence that usage of the Berber word preceded contemporary knowledge in North Africa of the West African empire. All of the alternatives appear to me either derivative of *gana* or folk etymologies. Thomas Hale (1998) faces similar problems in his search for the origin of *griot*, a word used to identify praise singers and poets across Saharan and Sahel West Africa. After presenting alternative origins of *griot*, Hale advances his theory that *guinea*, *gnawa* and *griot* share a common origin in *gana*, the name for the war leader of a 1000-year-old West African capital. This term later came to stand for the capital itself, and by extension the empire. Hale argues that the Berber word *agenaou*, "land of the blacks," was itself derived from this place-name through trade and contact across the Sahara, and this conclusion seems most likely to me.

represented by spirit leaders. The Muslim spirits, the whites, are led by the saint of Baghdad, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, who binds together both believing spirits and Muslim saints within the bonds of ecstasy. The white spirits are a representation of an "Eastern" origin, related to Islam. The second group is associated with Baba Mimun, the patron saint of the Gnawa, the master of initiation who wears a red fez decorated with cowry shells. In Morocco, cowries are seen as a symbol of Africa, and the Black Spirits likewise represent an African origin for the Gnawa. The duality between West Africa and the central Arab lands is represented in the Gnawa ceremony when the dancers sometimes appear to metamorphose into savage beasts and at other times make the Muslim profession of faith. This duality has led to some confusion among antagonistic observers, for whom "the Gnawa are exorcists and 'chasers of devils'"; meanwhile, for the initiates, "the alliance with these same entities represent the actual end and goal of their rituals" (Hell 2002:118). Hell argues that the bipolarity should not be understood as opposite but as complementary: "The ecstasy and the incorporation of genies permits the adepts to cross all the states necessary for a total possession, one complete *lila* (night) being assimilated into a real voyage across the different cosmic lights" (119). We can attribute the duality to a strong assertion that the Gnawa are Muslims and West Africans simultaneously (El Hamel 2008), and are fully Moroccan.

Hell ties the bipolarity to a slippage between East and South in the origin stories that are told. Some say the first Gnawa in Morocco was a griot from Mali in West Africa who was sent by his king to Mulay Isma'il. Carrying only his ginbri, the griot

was installed in the royal palace in Meknes in the seventeenth century, when he founded the first Gnawa group. In contrast, the Gnawa leaders of Fes and Meknes consider the Gnawa to be true sons of Bilal, a servant of the Prophet Muhammad who became the fourth Muslim converted (after Muhammad's wife, Khadija, his uncle Abu Talib, and his cousin Abu Bakr). A slave, Bilal was tortured by his owner for his faith, and so Muhammad bought him and freed him. Bilal was the first *muezzin*, the one who calls the faithful to prayer, and is considered one of the closest of the Prophet's companions. When Mulay Idriss, a descendent of the Prophet and the founder of Islam in Morocco, came from Arabia in the eighth century, they say, he brought with him an Ethiopian servant, a descendent of Bilal. This man founded the Gnawa sect. Similarities between the Gnawa sect and the Zar sect of East Africa and Arabia (Boddy 1989) seem to support the second theory, while the first one is supported by consilience between Gnawa practices and musics and those of West Africa, as well as by historical and ethnohistorical documentation. It should be clear that movement across the Sahara was not only vertical but also horizontal.[3] Enough evidence exists to suggest that we can't rule out an eastern origin for some of the beliefs and practices of the Gnawa. Moreover, simplistic analyses that produce two aspects of Gnawa practice, "African" and "Muslim," have an unfortunate if unintended result of reinscribing narratives

[3] The ancient civilization center of Kanem-Bornu, founded in the eighth century C.E. in the vicinity of Lake Chad, was the site of what is still the longest single continuous dynasty in world history, from the ninth century to the nineteenth century C.E. Kanem-Bornu mediated trade and travel from Egypt and the Levant to the Niger River and from Ethiopia and southern Arabia to Tunis. It is thus likely that many of the blacks in Morocco, like many groups across West Africa, can very likely trace their origins to the region that is now Chad (formerly a much more fertile and densely populated region) and beyond to Sudan, Ethiopia, and Arabia.

concerning the perceived "shallowness" of Muslim identity among North Africans that were used as a means of colonial division and rule and that are sustained by popular Western exoticism (Hammoudi 1993; Schuyler 2000).

Nevertheless, questions of origins are usually predicated around contemporary concerns of identity. What is important is not to determine the exact origins of the Gnawa but rather to understand their place in recent Moroccan society, which is so prominent because membership is not limited to Black Moroccans. Within Morocco, three key distinctions separate the Gnawa from the other Moroccan sects: their Africanness, their strangeness and foreignness, and finally their low social status. The three are related, and in the rest of this section I tease apart some of the origins of Gnawa Africanness, strangeness, and low social status within Morocco. The key concept here is that of racial formation within a context of cultural mixing related to enslavement and forced migration.

MOROCCO ACROSS THE ALMORAVID SAHARA

In terms of history as the writing of events, North African history goes back to the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and Vandals of the classical periods, an outsider history of diverse conquests (Laroui 1977:27).[4] A continuous historical record for

[4] By appealing to written historical records, I am not excluding alternative historical methods and do not intend to imply that I am dismissing the voices of non-elite members of North African society. I do attempt a modicum of "reading against" the written record (Visweswaran 1996). In fact, I do feel deeply ambivalent about the strong dependence on written records alone. Nevertheless, a fully radical, feminist account that would seek to restore some of the hidden voices of history that have been obscured and effaced by nationalist and elite historiography is beyond the scope of this project.

Morocco can generally be established from the arrival of Islam and the founding of the first Muslim state (the Idrissid dynasty) in the eighth century CE. Laroui notes that the ninth century marked the "true opening of the Sahara" to North Africans (1977:128), because it was also around this time that the camel was introduced to West Africa. When discussing Moroccan interactions with West Africans, however, most scholars tend to focus on the subsequent dynasties of the Almoravids (1062-1147), the Almohads (1147-1269), the Merenids (1269-1465), the Saadians (1465-1659), and the 'Alawites (1659-), of whom the current king, Muhammad VI, is the most recent sovereign.

The Almoravid dynasty (*al-murabitun*, 1062-1137) was founded by members of the Lemtouna Berber tribe, who "reconciled business with holy war" (Hell 2002:76) and first marked a continuous history of intensified relations between Morocco and West Africa. Converted to Islam over the previous two centuries, they came to control the ancient trade routes between North Africa and Timbuktu, which had revolved around the gold trade since the eighth century, when the city of Sijilmasa in southern Morocco had been founded (757 C.E.). During the Almoravid dynasty a confederation of Sanhaja Berber traders in that city "imposed their suzerainty" on the kingdom of Ghana and founded the city of Awdaghost in what is now Mauritania (Laroui 1977:158-159). Awdaghost was taken by Ghana in 1040. When the Almoravids came out of the western Sahara, they turned first toward Sijilmasa and took the city in 1053. They then turned south to retake Awdaghost before they returned to retake Sijilmasa in 1056,

which had revolted in the meantime. The Almoravids then turned north and founded Marrakech (1062), which "replaced Sijilmasa as the great gold market" (Laroui 1977:162). This northward expansion led to Almoravid rule over much of the northwest corner of Africa as well as southern Spain.

After founding Marrakech the Almoravids went on to conquer everything between the western Sahara and Algiers by 1080 (Laroui 1977:163). Rather than continuing eastward, however, the leader Yusuf Ibn Tashfin turned north to support the embattled amirs of the taifa states of al-Andalus in what is now southern Spain. After taking control of much of al-Andalus, the Almoravids continued their forays into West Africa, which resulted in the capture of numerous black slaves in the wake of Ghana's decline after 1100 C.E. The addition of black women ("concubines") into the families of Almoravid leaders "contributed to the strong interbreeding of the Almoravids" (Hell 2002:77). Jean-Marie LeSage (1999) also emphasizes the "métissage" of these tribes, their racially and ethnically blended nature. The "veiled men" (LeSage 1999:24) of the desert Sanhaja Berber tribe had already been successful in gaining control over the trade routes of the Niger River cities. When these Berbers turned their attention to the cities of northern Morocco and southern Spain, Black soldiers played significant roles in the Almoravid armies.

MEDIATING BLACKNESS IN ALMORAVID AND ALMOHAD MOROCCO

Many important Black religious leaders and figures arose during the Almoravid and Almohad periods (Cornell 1998). We should note that these were not necessarily transported slaves or even their descendents—Black people were identified as living in North African in antiquity. One story takes place in 1141 amidst the civil war waged between the falling Almoravids and the ascendant Almohad dynasty (*al-muwahhidun*, 1147-1269). In this story the Almoravid sultan is ʻAli ibn Yusuf. Abu al-Hasan ʻAli Ibn Hirzihim (d. 1164) is the famous "Sidi Harazem," a great scholar whose pilgrimage site is near Fes. Abu al-Hakam Ibn Barrajan is a famous mystic and political activist of Seville who has been brought before the sultan in Marrakech:

> When Abu al-Hakam ibn Barrajan was ordered to be brought from Cordoba to Marrakech, he was asked about the matters causing his censure and brought them forth, commenting on their implications and differentiating [his beliefs] from those for which he was accused. Abu al-Hakam said, "By God, I will not live, and the one who brought me here [i.e., the sultan] will not live after my death!" Then Abu al-Hakam died [i.e., was executed] and the sultan commanded that he be thrown on the city garbage heap and that no one make the funeral prayer for him. This [command] was authorized by the jurists who were his accusers.
>
> A black man who worked for ʻAli ibn Hirzihim and attended his lessons went to [the shaykh, ibn Hirzihim] and told him what the sultan had ordered

concerning Abu al-Hakam. Then Ibn Hirzihim said to him, "If you wish to sell your soul to God, do what I tell you."

"Command what you wish and I will do it," the man replied. [The shaykh] said, "Proclaim in the streets and markets of Marrakech: 'Ibn Hirzihim orders you to be present at the funeral, the legist, the exalted ascetic Abu al-Hakam ibn Barrajan. May the curse of God be upon him who is able to come and does not!"

The man did as he was commanded and when [Ibn Hirzihim's challenge] was made known to the sultan, he said, "He who is aware of [Ibn Barrajan's] excellence and is not present will be cursed by God." (Cornell 1998:26)

A Black person here plays a mediating role between the political dissident and the new ruling authority that needs the legitimacy offered by that dissident. The assertion might also be made that the one taking on inordinate risk is Black.

Also from at-Tadili's *at-Tashawwuf* comes the story of Munya bint Maymun (d. 1199). Known as Mimuna Tagnawt, Berber for "Maymuna the Black Woman," she lived as a widow in Marrakech where she prayed alongside her male counterparts and practiced mortification of the body. She could discern whether food came from a lawful or unlawful source:

A merchant invited me for dinner and I accepted reluctantly. When he placed the platter of food before me, it spoke to me and said, "Do not eat me, for I am forbidden!" Because I was concerned not to offend my host, I put a small piece

> of meat to my lips and then put it down. After that, I was prevented from making invocations and supererogatory prayers for three days and voices spoke to me from my right and left, saying, "This is how it is with dogs whose stomachs cause them to wander!" (Cornell 1998:53)

The great Sufi saints Abu Shu'ayb and Abu Yi'zza were also Black. During the civil war, they were involved in the siege of Marrakech by the Almohads (1146-1147). Abu Shu'ayb, commonly known as Mulay Bush'ayb, was Abu Shu'ayb ibn Sa'id al-Sanhaji (d. 1166). From a prominent family of Sanhaja pastoralists of Azemmour in the Dukkala region on the Atlantic coast, Abu Shu'ayb studied from Masmuda masters, including Abu Innur (Sidi Bennur), at Iliskawen in Dukkala, and he practiced "ethical hypersensivity" (Cornell 1998:59): For example, when his cow crossed over to feed from a neighbor's garden, Abu Shu'ayb first reached in the cow's mouth to remove all the illegally gotten food he could, and then for the next three days he donated all the milk the cow produced to the poor. Abu Shu'ayb said he would never eat raisins from grapes that had come from vines watered by a shared canal, since there was no guarantee that the land over which the canal flowed had been lawfully obtained (Cornell 1998:59). A political activist against the Almoravid regime, Abu Shu'ayb protested the onerous taxes it imposed on Dukkala:

> When the Almoravid governor of Azemmour wanted to execute a group of tax rebels, Abu Shu'ayb went to him in order to plead their case. When the haughty Saharan *imashagh* noticed the shaykh's dark-brown complexion, he considered

> him to be of low status and rebuffed him. After roughly ordering Abu Shu'ayb to leave his presence, the governor was stricken by severe stomach cramps. "The man you have just sent away is Abu Shu'ayb," someone told him. "He is one of the *awliya* ["friends" of God] and he is angry at you for rebuffing him." The governor quickly apologized to the shaykh and allowed him to intercede for those he had condemned to death. Henceforth, whenever this particular governor heard that Abu Shu'ayb was coming, he would release all of his Sanhaja prisoners before the shaykh arrived. (Cornell 1998:60)

Despite his alliance with the Almohads, Abu Shu'ayb's legacy was that he "'merged the horizons' of Sanhaja and Masmuda Sufism under the Nuriyya tradition" (Cornell 1998:57), reconciling competing religious factions and playing a mediating role between them. He spoke out strongly against the Almohad massacres of Sanhaja Berbers after the Almohads came to power, and he was arrested by the caliph Abd al-Mu'min in connection with the Dukkala tax revolt. During his trial Abu Shu'ayb cursed the caliph three times. In fear, the caliph asked what he could do for the shaykh, who took the opportunity to intercede for the wives and concubines of the former Almoravid leader and those of his sons, thereby mediating politically as well as religiously, and again acting as a buffer between forces competing for power.

"Mulay Bu'azza," whose shrine is in Taghiya between Rommani and Oulmes, south of Rabat, is an enigma—his genealogy and even the pronunciation of his name are in dispute. According to Cornell (1998:68), Abu Yi'zza was an "illiterate and

monolingual Masmuda Berber from the mountainous region of Haskura." He was "Shaykh of the Shaykhs of the Maghrib" to his fellow Sufis and a miracle worker to the masses across Morocco, among whom he had become famous by the time of his death in an epidemic in 1177, aged over 100 years.

During the Dukkala tax revolt that resulted in the Almohad inquisition of Abu Shu'ayb, Abu Yi'zza was also implicated and put on trial, because he was aligned with his Nuriyya master Abu Shu'ayb, who in turn was identified with *his* master, Ibn Wayhlan. Living in Marrakech, Ibn Wayhlan had resisted the Almohad siege of the city. Upon his arrest, Abu Yi'zza was imprisoned in the minaret of the Kutubiyya mosque. Like Abu Shu'ayb, he answered all questions with Quranic quotations and was released.

Abu Yi'zza practiced strict vegetarianism, the result of observing a systematic asceticism. To deny his selfish nature, Abu Yi'zza would laboriously prepare simple meals and then refuse all but a tiny portion of them (Cornell 1998:68). He wandered about the wilderness eating wild plants for 25 years. For another 20 years he lived in the mountains above Tin Mal, the fortress headquarters of Ibn Tumart, the founder of Almohadism. During this time he wore only a woven reed mat to cover himself. Later, Abu Yi'zza lived for 18 years along the Dukkala coast, known during this time as "Abu Wanalgut" for eating only *wanalgut*, a certain plant that grew in trash heaps. For another length of time, he ate only "the edible hearts of oleanders and wild acorn mash, which he would make into flat breads and carry in a small pouch on his belt" (Cornell 1998:69). It was during this time that Abu Yi'zza became the disciple of Abu Shu'ayb.

Abu Yi'zza practiced *malamatiyya*-inspired devotion, the "path of shame" involving the intentional breaking of specific religious codes that Sufis sometimes adopted when they felt they were being held in too high esteem:

> One of the companions of Abu Yi'zza got married. His wife asked him for a female slave, but he did not have one. So Abu Yi'zza said to him, "I will substitute myself for the female slave," for he was black and had no hair on his face. He dressed himself in the clothes of a female slave and served the man and his wife for an entire year. He ground wheat, kneaded dough, made bread, and poured the water—all at night—while in the day he performed his devotions in the mosque. After a year had gone by, the wife said to her husband, "I have never seen anyone like this slave! She does all that is [normally] done during the day at night, and never appears in the daytime." Her husband turned away from her and neglected to answer, but she continued to ask him until he said, "No one works for you but Abu Wanalgut, and he is no female slave!" Then she knew it was Abu Yi'zza and said, "By God, this one will never work for me again, and I swear that I will do my work myself!" From that time on, she did her work herself. (at-Tadili, *at-Tashawwuf*, 218-219; cited in Cornell 1998:70)

Both Abu Shu'ayb and Abu Yi'zza were native and free born Berber Muslim Moroccans. However, the fact of their Blackness led them to show solidarity with the newly enslaved immigrants from across the Sahara, including women slaves. Moreover, their ambiguous racial and ethnic status also enabled them to play mediating roles

between Sanhaja and Masmuda, Almoravid and Almohad, rich and poor, powerful and powerless, and even husband and wife.

The Almohads (1147-1269) opposed the Almoravids on moral grounds, perceiving that the Almoravids had become weak and corrupt. Sedentary residents of the High Atlas, the Almohads were less "Africanized" (Hell 2002:77) than the Almoravids, focused more on salt than on gold, and consolidated their commercial ties with the desert caravan cities of Teghazza, Tawdeni, and Walata. The struggle over the greatest of these cities, Sijilmassa, led to their downfall. On the whole, however, the Almohads so neglected the Saharan trade routes that by the time the Almohad empire was collapsing between 1238 and 1275, the Saharan trade "had either died out or been diverted" (Laroui 1977:199).

Laroui distinguishes between maritime and trans-Saharan trade in the fourteenth century. He argues that, although the sea trade was seen as bestowing wealth on Almohad and Merenid society, it actually benefited only the political leaders, leaving the rest of the country worse off. Laroui contrasts the drawbacks of sea trade to the benefits of the overland trade across the Sahara, which involved the whole country and pulled it together: "The significant fact is not that the one was operated at a profit and the other at a slight loss, but rather that the one unified the country while the other divided it" (Laroui 1977:218). The Saharan trade, and the connections to West Africa that it entailed, is thus presented as central to Moroccan economic and social stability.

MEDIEVAL ETHNOLOGY

Before continuing beyond the thirteenth century, it is necessary to establish more clearly what contemporary authors intended when they pointed out the physical attributes of individuals, what we can interpret as contributing to a racial typology. Bernard Lewis (1999:40) has more recently argued that, while race is "still of overriding importance" in some parts of the world, "in the Middle East race matters less." By race, he appears to be referring to the existence of a lighter-skinned elites ruling over diverse societies in which poorer and more marginal members have darker skin. In an earlier work, however, he made a subtler argument.

In *Race and Slavery in the Middle East* (1990), Lewis presents a dilemma: On the one hand, scholarly and popular attitudes have noted that racism runs counter to the ideals of Islam. Lewis cites Toynbee in the *Study of History* on Umayyad Arabs, who argues that there was no racism against Black people, even though he claimed that swarthy White Arabs considered ruddy White Europeans to be inferior. Lewis (1990:18) judges that such symptomatic statements are not accurate for the Medieval period. Instead, the pointed nature of elucidating an absence of racism in the Middle East dates to the nineteenth century, when world-wide press coverage of the American Civil War linked race with slavery for many Muslims and Middle Easterners. The case is nevertheless made that numerous Black attained positions of leadership in Medieval Muslim states, and that Muslim law explicitly forbade excluding people based on their physical appearance.

Meanwhile, in *The Thousand and One Nights*, Lewis shows us repeated images of kings who return to their harems to find their wives and concubines being raped or seduced by Black criminals or servants. The kings, who unleash all sorts of horrific punishments on these couples, are

> clearly white supremacists, with sexual fantasies, or rather nightmares, of a sadly familiar quality. This resemblance in *The Thousand and One Nights* to certain aspects of the old American South is confirmed if we look more closely into that work. Blacks appear frequently in the stories that make up the Nights. Where they do, it is almost invariably in a menial role—as porters, household servants, slaves, cooks, bath attendants, and the like—rarely, if ever, rising above this level in society. Perhaps even more revealing in its way is the story of the good black slave who lived a life of virtue and piety, for which he was rewarded by turning white at the moment of his death. (Lewis 1990:19)

Lewis thus presents the dilemma: On the one hand, historical sources present the Medieval Arab and Muslim empires as a "racially egalitarian society free from prejudice or discrimination"; on the other hand, contemporary popular and artistic representations reveal a society dominated by light-skinned rulers who hold "a familiar pattern of sexual fantasy, social and occupational discrimination, and an unthinking identification of lighter with better and darker with worse" (Lewis 1990:19). Which of these two is true? In fact, as Lewis and others have shown the truth lies in between these two extremes.

In Hellenistic and Roman antiquity, physical differences did not equate to superiority and inferiority. Enslavement was widespread, but the criteria for producing slaves were related to foreignness: Any foreigner was held to be inferior and enslavable (Lewis 1990:18). There were no "slave races"—the civilizations in Ethiopia and China "were both respected, and there is no real evidence in Jewish, Greek, or Roman sources of lower esteem for darker skins or higher esteem for lighter complexions" (Lewis 1990:18). Why did this situation change after the seventh century? Lewis offers two arguments: First, the range and scope of the Arab and Muslim empires are much greater than for previous empires. Rome and Byzantium were limited largely to the Mediterranean; Alexander's empire, though much bigger, was quickly divided into regional sub-empires. Only the Umayyad and Abbasid states, and their successors, ranged from Western Europe to West Africa, from the Eurasian steppes to China, around the Indian Ocean through East Africa and India to Southeast Asia and Indonesia. The second argument concerns the *hajj*, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which brought annual pilgrims to the same site. When scholars from all these regions began to compare their respective cultural values, they began as well to recognize the visible differences between them and to theorize these differences along the lines of race (Lewis 1990:18). Their conclusions used some of the terminology of classical antiquity, namely the concept of the barbarian and the method of humoral medicine, but with important adjustments and refinements.

In “Barbarians in Arab Eyes,” Aziz al-Azmeh (1992:6) presents this schema: The known world began at the equator and ended at the North Pole. It was divided into seven zones or “climates,” whose chief determining attribute was temperature: the first zone was unbearably hot, while the seventh zone was unbearably cold. There was some question whether any creatures lived in the first zone. Zone 2 contained most of Africa and Arabia. The central Arab lands were in the temperate third and fourth zones: Syria and North Africa (Zone 3), and the Mediterranean, Iran, and parts of China (Zone 4). Zones 5 and 6 included the lands of the Franks, Slavs, and Turks, while the frozen regions of northern Europe and Asia fell into Zone 7 (al-Azmeh 1992:7-9).

In addition to temperature, a secondary determinate of climate was humidity, from dry to humid. These two factors combined to correspond to the four humors of the body: Atrabile (“Black Bile”), Bile (“Yellow Bile”), Phlegm, and Blood, which produced the four dispositions: Melancholic (hopelessness), Choleric (anger), Phlegmatic (calmness), and Sanguine (courageous and also amorous). Cold and Dry climates caused too much Atrabile to be produced in the body, which explained why people from cold and dry climates tended to be irritable and despondent. Hot and Dry climates produced too much Bile in the body, which led to people who were easily angered. Cold and Humid climates produced too much Phlegm, explaining why people from such climates tended to be calm, even unemotional. Finally, Hot and Humid climates produced too much Blood. People gestated in hot and humid regions tended to

be courageous and hopeful, but also very amorous. A temperate climate produced a good mix of all the humors (al-Azmeh 1992:6).

Climate was most important during gestation of a fetus. In temperate climates, a good mix of the humors during gestation led to temperate dispositions. However, in extreme climates that were too hot, cold, dry, or humid, the fetus was "cooked" or "dried" too much or not enough, with a resulting defect in disposition (al-Azmeh 1992:8-9). Contemporary critics of this theory raised the problem of regions like Arabia, alongside southern China and southern India, which fell into Zone 2 but which clearly produced temperate babies. This anomaly was easily explained away: Since all of these regions could be represented as peninsulas or coastal areas, they were thus open to increased humidity from the sea, which moderated the heat. Al-Azmeh notes that this explanation was not extended to account for Somalia or other similar regions. Significantly,

> It was social judgment which ultimately determined the degree to which credence would be given to geographical determinism, and this determinism was applied mercilessly only in the construction of sheer barbarism, which was not merely a distemper with varying degrees of severity, but fully a disnature. (al-Azmeh 1992:8)

In other words, scientific laws were contravened or explained away whenever it was necessary to rationalize racial difference and an attendant statement of inferiority.

Despite the racism of such attitudes, though, it bears stating that they does not bear much resemblance at all to the racialism we associate with nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century anthropology, with its appeal to unchangeable gene pools. Racial differences in the Middle Ages were connected entirely to climate. The only major argument concerning the sustainability of traits was that between what I'm calling geographical determinism and congenital determinism. Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) and his followers argued that the temperaments of the various races were thus only because of continued effects of the sun or lack of it: "Negroes ... tended to be given to erratic behaviour, to levity, to prodigious sexuality, and to be disposed to dance and rhythm" (al-Azmeh 1992:9) exclusively because of the effects of too much sunlight and heat, but they could change if they moved to a more temperate climate. In contrast, the congenital determinists, followers of Galen like Mas'udi (d. 956), were convinced that effects of the too much sunlight and heat during gestation were permanent and irreversible. Even if they were moved to a temperate climate, many of these authors felt, Blacks remained "virtually unteachable" (al-Azmeh 1992:9). It is not mentioned what they thought would happen if two Black people parented a child who was gestated in a temperate climate—we can assume that such a situation would form yet another aberration and inconsistency in such theories.

Al-Azmeh points out that such contradictions abounded: A single text might present blatantly false ethnological stereotypes on one page and a detailed ethnographic description that directly contradicted the stereotype on another page. This was because

the two kinds of evidence supported different purposes: Both discourses proposed to describe a world created by God, including cultural and racial diversity, which could be "read" to reveal God's purpose and character in his creation. Nevertheless, ethnographic description was a segment of *adab*, "urbane secular writing" like history and geography, which promoted cultural unity by "cultivating a common cultural identity" (al-Azmeh 1992:18). In contrast, ethnological theorization was intended as the management of diversity by those positioned within a "cultural and political centrality and associated empowerment which was very real" (al-Azmeh 1992:18). The continued necessity for asymmetries of power to be explained, particularly during moral panics but also in relationships concerning war, conquest, and enslavement, explains the continued appeal of such discourses.

Lewis attempts a full description of medieval slavery and race relations. His evidence relies largely on scholarly legal opinions and histories, though, and as a result it suffers from the deficiencies of any history of the written record, which would naturally paint those elites responsible for writing it in a more favorable light. Mohammed Ennaji (1999) argues that very point in his analysis of race and slavery in nineteenth-century Morocco; Ennaji dismisses legal ideals in favor of looking closely at actual legal cases. These often show entire segments of Moroccan society disobeying the letter as well as the spirit of the laws laid down concerning enslavement—free people are enslaved, Muslims are enslaved and even sold to non-Muslims, children of freemen are enslaved, Black people are automatically considered to be slaves, etc. I

present key features of Ennaji's description in a later section; at this point, however, it must be said that the basic outlines of Lewis' arguments concerning Medieval enslavement and racial formation are no doubt accurate, particularly when he describes how the law ideally prescribed who could be enslaved and how they should be treated. Nevertheless, if we are interested in learning how slaves and Black people were actually treated in the Medieval Arab and Muslim empires, we might still be missing an accurate representation.

The change wrought by Arab and Muslim civilization on racial formation was paradoxically contradicted by its effect on slavery. While racial formation could be argued to have gotten its start at this time, with "universal" ethnological typologizing, the treatment of slaves by law was greatly improved. This was particularly the case in Arabia in the early years. Prior to the seventh century in Arabia, slaves were considered merely chattel and horribly mistreated. The advent of Islam "enormously improved the position of the Arabian slave, who was now no longer merely a chattel but was also a human being with a certain religious and hence a social status and with certain quasi-legal rights" (Lewis 1990:6). Islam promoted the idea that slaves should be freed, and it also limited greatly the source of new slaves: either a child whose parents were both slaves (natural increase of pure parentage) or capture in war. Moreover, the only just war was a war of jihad, involving a Muslim state fighting against a non-Muslim state.

People who were already Muslims, who were raised in Muslim homes, in Muslim countries, or as members of protected religious minorities in Muslim countries,

could not be enslaved (Lewis 1990:8). Slaves could convert to Islam without it affecting their slave status, but owners of such slaves were encouraged to free them before they died. Children of a Muslim father were automatically free when they were born, even if their mother was a slave. In fact, such mothers were also free in some respects, holding the position of *umm walad*, mother of a (free) child, upon such status being confirmed by law. Judges were also entitled to declare the liberation of a slave who had been a victim of a cruel master. Other paths to freedom included manumission by the owner and a kind of "self-purchase" whereby an owner and a slave would sign a contract in which the owner promised to free the slave after a fixed sum of money had been paid. The contract could be broken at any time by the slave but never by the owner.

The new laws limiting the sources of slaves greatly reduced the supply of slaves in the seventh century and afterwards (Lewis 1990:9). There were four: direct capture in war, tribute from non-Muslim vassals, natural increase, and purchase. The first three are quickly dismissed: After the first few centuries, the boundaries of the Muslim world stabilized, and new territories were added only in India and Africa. Tribute continued from a few vassal states, most notably Nubia, which preserved its non-Muslim status and independence for a time precisely because its tribute was so valuable, but eventually Nubia, too, submitted to Islam. Lewis dismisses natural increase for four reasons: Castration, military service, menial labor, and disease. Some male slaves were castrated prior to being brought to Muslim regions. (They could not be castrated afterwards, since bodily mutilation is illegal under Muslim law.) Thus fewer slaves

could be fathers, and children born to slave mothers tended to be fathered by free men. Military slaves usually were awarded freedom as a condition of their service. Lewis states that menial, domestic, and manual laborers were discouraged from marrying one another. Finally, slaves faced very high death rates. Lewis attributes these rates to disease, since many slaves who were brought from rural regions to cities lacked immunity during urban epidemics. The only reliable source for newly enslaved people, then, was purchase. Lewis notes that the laws promulgated to improve the situation of slaves and to limit slavery paradoxically led to the creation of an enormous network of slave routes and markets on the margins of the empire (Lewis 1990:11).

Lewis takes care to note that, even in pre-Islamic Arabia and the time of the Prophet, Blackness was not identified with enslavement. He partly explains the slave status of Bilal, the first muezzin in Islam (caller to prayer). Bilal was a Black slave who converted to Islam and was punished for this conversion by his owner. Abu Bakr, Muhammad's uncle, purchased him and freed him, and he became Muhammad's closest companion, friend, and personal aide. Lewis cites early Arab manuscripts that refer to Ethiopians, known as *Habashin* ("Abyssinians"), Christian allies of Byzantium that were active militarily in Arabia in the sixth century. The Christian empires of Byzantium and Ethiopia were allied against Persia. Following the invasion the Ethiopians set up a client Christian regime in southern Arabia that was subsequently overthrown by rebels from within the Ethiopian military forces, and this rebel state was eventually accorded legitimacy by Ethiopia and Byzantium. When the Persians later

took Yemen, some Ethiopians from that state—soldiers and other—were captured, and some of these captives were enslaved in and around Mecca (Lewis 1990:22-23). Lewis doesn't go so far as to suggest it, but it seems to me not impossible that Bilal's origins might be traced to some of these communities of enslaved soldiers. In any case, though, given the power and wealth of Ethiopia at the time, it is unlikely that slave raiders were inordinately targeting Ethiopians for capture and taking them to Arabia to sell them there.

Racial categories, particularly in the earlier decades of Islam, were largely descriptive. Lewis notes that color differences were personal and relative. There were many terms used, and these reflected differences in skin brightness, intensity, and shade: terms equivalent to black, white, red, olive, yellow, and two shades of brown—the rough equivalent of "swarthy," "sallow," blonde," or "ruddy" in "modern" (i.e., White) usage. Moreover, sometimes the Arabs were described as "white," in relation to "black" Africans. When contrasting Arabs to Persians, Arab writers sometimes referred to themselves as "black" relative to "white" Persians (Lewis 1990:25). Several early Muslim leaders were Black or partly Black, like the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab; 'Amr ibn al-'As, the conqueror of Egypt; and Abu Bakra (d. 672), one of the early companions of the Prophet (Lewis 1990:25).

After 632, important changes came about that rigidly fixed the color terms used to describe people, reducing these to Black and White and making them "ethnic and absolute instead of personal and relative" (Lewis 1990:26). Black people nearly

exclusively came from Africa, while White ("white" and occasionally "(light) red people were "Arabs, Persians, Greeks, Slavs, and other peoples to the north and east of the black lands" (Lewis 1990:26). The second important change was that black skin came to be equated with inferiority. After this time, it is clear that "a new and sometimes vicious pattern of racial hostility and discrimination had emerged within the Islamic world" (Lewis 1990:36).

What brought about these changes? Lewis provides three causes: Conquest, material development, and slavery (Lewis 1990:37-42). First, during the Arab conquests, Arab discrimination against non-Arab converts was a significant source of conflict in early Islam. Half-Arab offspring of the Arab conquerors and rulers were never considered equal to the children of free Arab mothers. The pre-Islamic Arab model was that free fathers of slave children could choose to recognize those children, which would render them free. Islam made that recognition mandatory, but many Arab fathers continued to resist doing so. Among Mediterranean peoples, a child of an Arab father and a Syrian or Persian mother would not look very different from his or her father. Due to the Arabs' lighter skin, however, a Black mother would produce a difference in the child that was "recognizable at sight" (Lewis 1990:40). He goes on to claim that "'son of a black woman' was a not infrequent insult addressed to such persons, and 'son of a white woman' was accordingly used in praise or boasting." (Lewis 1990:40). Lewis' second explanation for the change concerns the experience of material civilization: Arab conquerors who went into Southwest Asia and Europe met

larger cities and higher levels of material development—cities, despotic kings, large markets, etc.—while those who went into North Africa, East Africa, and West Africa found lower levels of such development. Third, slavery played a major causative role in racism. Lewis reiterates that the ban on enslavement within Muslim territories led to the exportation of the slave trade. This export led to Africa being targeted for the slave trade, which led to Blacks being inordinately identified with slaves as early as the eighth century. Moreover, this enslavement of African non-Muslims often led to the conversion of their home countries. "The notion that slavery is a divine boon to mankind, by means of which pagan and barbarous peoples are brought to Islam and civilization, occurs very frequently in later writers" (Lewis 1990:42). These "pagan and barbarous peoples" inhabited regions to the north of the Mediterranean as well as to the south, and moreover, unlike East and West Africans, many Europeans and Eurasians never converted to Islam. Why, then, are paganism and its resulting enslavement so exclusively associated with Africa?

Lewis does not clarify why European "pagan savages" came to be enslaved at lower rates than African ones. Perhaps much later (after the fourteenth century), greater wealth among the Europeans led to slave raids becoming too expensive, since Europeans were better armed than Africans and were also able to pay higher ransoms for captured slaves. A more likely cause, though, is the widespread belief among scholars that Africans are natural slaves. This perspective does not originate from the Qur'an and is not a problem of Islam: "At no time did Muslim theologians or jurists

accept the idea that there may be races of mankind predisposed by nature or foredoomed by Providence to the condition of slavery" (Lewis 1990:54). Instead, Muslim scholars "unanimously reject[ed] the enslavement of free Muslims, of whatever race or origin" (Lewis 1990:55). Rather, Lewis argues, the idea that Blacks are natural slaves comes from antiquity and most especially from Aristotle's concept of the slave nation. Although Lewis notes that Aristotle did not identify which nations were natural slaves, he did indicate that they were barbarians—definitely not Greeks or Romans, and more likely Asians than Europeans (Lewis 1990:55). Aristotle's ideas were influential among dominant Medieval Muslim scholars like Avicenna (Ibn Sina, 980-1037) and Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). Following humoric medicine, Avicenna identifies those in extreme climates to the north and south as "peoples who were by their vary nature slaves, and incapable of higher things—'for there must be masters and slaves,'" apparently citing Aristotle (Lewis 1990:55). More to the point, Ibn Khaldun argues that "the Negro nations are, as a rule, submissive to slavery, because [Negroes] have little [that is essentially] human and have attributes that are quite similar to those of dumb animals" (Lewis 1990: 53). As a result, "the perception remained, disputed but widespread, that African Muslims were somehow different from other Muslims and that Africa was a legitimate source of slaves" (Lewis 1990:53).

Such views were strongly opposed by individuals, even after 700 or 800 years of their being taken for granted. Lewis cites Moroccan historian Ahmad Khalid al-Nasiri (1834-1897), who lamented the continued enslavement of Black people, such that

"many of the common people believe that the cause of their enslavement in Holy Law is that they are black of color and imported from those parts" (Lewis 1990:58). Nasiri vehemently denies the validity of such views, using the strongest language imaginable: "By God's life, this is one of the worst and greatest abominations against religion, because the black people are Muslim people, with the same rights and duties as ourselves" (Lewis 1990:58). We can interpret in the angry tone and vehemence of his protest Nasiri's intent to gain the attention of people whose ordinary attitudes are completely opposed to his. In other words, by the nineteenth century, at least in Morocco, Blackness was firmly identified with enslavement and with inferiority. I return to the nineteenth century in a later section; at this point, I need to detail the transition from Medieval to early Modern Moroccan society, particularly the crucial period between the end of the sixteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth.

MERENID AND SA'ADIAN EXPANSION

The political confusion and upheaval associated with the dynasty of the nomadic Berber Merenids ("*banu marin*," 1269-1465) should not overshadow the fact that, during this period, Morocco established formal ties to the now Muslim kingdom of Mali (Hell 2002). This was the period during which the great geographer Ibn Battuta made his historic trip to Gao, now in Niger, in 1352. Also around this time at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Portuguese were searching for a way to bypass the caravan routes in order to find more direct access to cross-Saharan trade. To do so they occupied

Essaouira and Safi and built fortresses there, to which they brought a strong contingent of Malinke slaves. In any case, the Merenids represented a largely economic takeover of the Maghrib that was lent support by newly settled Arabs of the rebellious Banu Hilal tribe, resettled from Arabia across North Africa until finally settling in Morocco. One segment of these, the Banu Ma'qil, took over most of the overland trade routes in southern Morocco by the beginning of the fifteenth century (Cornell 1998:161). The period of Merenid rule was perceived by later historians as marked by the pursuit of easy living at the expense of state concerns. Opposition to this state of affairs was centered in the zawiyyas, which lent their support to an eventual takeover by the new Sa'adian dynasty that began at the start of the sixteenth century (Cornell 1998).

The dynasty of the Sa'adians ("*al-sa'adiyyun,*" 1509-1659), originating in the Draa Valley in southern Morocco, marked intensified relations with West Africa. LeSage points to the period of the Sa'adians as the moment when the Moroccan empire came into its own. At the Battle of the Three Kings (1578), the thrones of Morocco and Portugal were thrown into uproar. The king of Portugal had backed a pretender to the Moroccan sultanate, and both the Portuguese king and the pretender died in the battle. The Sa'adian Sultan Abd al-Malik had enlisted the help of the Turks to win the battle, but he was also killed. Using the ensuing peace dividend, the Sa'adian monarch who survived the battle and inherited the throne, Sultan Ahmad al-Mansur, mounted an invasion of the Niger valley, armed with modern guns and European military expertise, in 1590-91 to gain control of the gold trade and was henceforth known as *al-dhahabi*,

"the Golden." In so doing, Ahmad heralded the downfall of the Songhay Empire. LeSage argues that the region of central West Africa became a Moroccan "protectorate" shortly thereafter, and he further points out that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Moroccan economy remained dependent on the lands of "Black Africa, the two banks of the Sahara still living in a common economy" (1999:43-44). We ultimately find counter arguments against the full integration of the two economies to be more convincing (see below). Nevertheless, even though there was no long-lasting integration of the two economies, we can still maintain that, following this event, ties between the two societies became stronger than ever before.

It is at this moment in the sixteenth century, LeSage argues, that the first Gnawa communities were established in Morocco (1999:47). Hell agrees that the subjugation of the Songhay Empire in 1591 was "an event of first importance" (2002:77). Not only did al-Mansur obtain vast wealth for the throne, but also at this time large populations of slaves were brought by the Sa'adians to the coastal city of Mogador, renamed Essaouira after its recapture by the Sa'adians. This time, the slaves were brought to work in sugar plantations. This population of slaves was composed not only of poor peasants or herdsmen. Rather, protests lodged by the inheritors of the Songhay state show that some of the 12,000 Timbuktu residents taken to Marrakech by al-Mansur were people from elite classes. These included high dignitaries, religious clergy, and nobility (Hell 2002:78). Since the region of the upper bend of the Niger River had been Muslim since

the eleventh century, including the Songhay Empire destroyed by al-Mansur, it is very likely that these elites were Muslims who had been illegally taken.[5]

Finally, in 1659 the 'Alawites ("*al-'alawiyyun*," 1659-) came out of the region of Sijilmassa in southern Morocco. At the time, more and more, the labor of slaves had become necessary for everyday life in Morocco. The height of the 'Alawite dynasty's power came during the reign of the sultan Mulay Isma'il (reigned 1672 to 1727), who was compared by European contemporaries to King Louis XIV as much for the wealth and splendor of his court as for his capricious rule and absolute power. As a means to achieving these ends, Mulay Isma'il accomplished an upheaval of the army, reorganizing it around the enslaved black soldiers. Black soldiers became the backbone of the throne's monopoly on power. 'Alawite dominance in central West Africa lessened by the end of the eighteenth century as both Morocco and Africa together came to feel the increasing control of Europe.

MILITARY SLAVERY UNDER ISMA'IL

If the conquest of Timbuktu in 1591 marked the beginning of an intensifying period of contact across the desert, the forced conscription into the 'Alawite army of tens of thousands of blacks in 1699 marks a moment even more significant for the

[5] Strictly speaking, al-Mansur's invasion itself could probably have been deemed illegal as well, since it was not a war of *jihad* against non-Muslims. The presence of slaves in the sugar plantations marked an innovation—since the fifteenth century, a nascent capitalist enterprise had been developing in Dukkala and the Sous, employing wage laborers to work in export-oriented industrial sugar operations owned by either the Portuguese or the Moroccan state and managed through lease by Jewish industrialists (Cornell 1990).

Gnawa. In 1672, Mulay Isma'il—"probably the son of a black concubine" (LeSage 1999:59)—came to power. He created an independent, loyal army by declaring all blacks in Morocco subject to forced conscription—legal enslavement—by the state. He justified this enslavement through manipulating Islamic law, which barred Muslims from enslaving other Muslims. Despite some opposition from both legal scholars and from black Moroccans, his project was successful.

Isma'il inherited a state that owed little to the *zawaya* (religious orders), since its income came mostly from taxes on French commercial activity (Laroui 1977:272-273). Isma'il continued what his brother and predecessor al-Rashid had started along these lines: destruction of the influence of the zawaya, imposition of heavy taxation, and creation of a strong military to accomplish both these ends. Previously, certain tribes and zawaya had rendered military service in substitution for paying taxes. According to El Hamel (2002:45), in this negotiated "clientele" system, Sufi orders and tribal groups supplied soldiers in exchange for tax exemptions and land rents. Isma'il could not rely on the soldiers so supplied to be loyal to him to the exclusion of their allegiance to leaders of the tribes and Sufi orders. As a result, he devised a plan to solve this problem. By canceling the military service, Isma'il was able to impose taxes on these tribes. Faced, then, with the need for a military, Isma'il got his "great idea": that the military "should have ties with no one social group" (Laroui 1977:272-273). In his search for a slave army, Isma'il first looked to descendents of the slaves brought back by al-Mansur from Sudan in 1591. Finding these to be too limited in number, Isma'il eventually

declared that even privately owned slaves were state property. These formed the *'Abid al-Bukhari*, the "slaves of Bukhari" after the volume upon which they swore their loyalty to the king. This was the *Sahih al-Bukhari* edition of the Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet.

El Hamel notes the creation of the *'Abid al-Bukhari*, also called the "Black Guard," as a "crucial turning point in Moroccan history, shaping the future of racial relations and black identity" (2002:44). Isma'il's legal defense for enslaving Muslims who happened to be Black was the argument that Blacks in Morocco were overwhelmingly of slave origin. Once freed, Isma'il argued, these former slaves lived lives of dissolution and rebellion. Those Blacks who were still enslaved, however, were hardworking, loyal, and strong, and peaceful. In effect, Isma'il's arguments "tacitly imply that the blacks are natural slaves!" (El Hamel 2002:47). Such arguments should not be seen as exceptional, though; rather, Isma'il was merely restating the accepted opinions of scholars such as Avicenna and Ibn Khaldun (Lewis 1990). Blacks dominated the military for the next 150 years, even serving as kingmakers, until a new Sultan dissolved the Black army in 1757 and replaced the Black leaders with Arabs. No matter what were Isma'il's strategic motivations for his action, such a racist conception on the part of the crown would certainly cement social separation and distinctiveness, in addition to legitimating already established attitudes supporting the superiority of non-Blacks.

Hell supports the hypothesis that the Gnawa identity originated during the reign of Isma'il. By 1727 the armed force was 150,000 strong, and remnants survive today, still serving the 'Alawite king, as a group of crack paratroopers. However, Hell rejects the argument that the current Gnawa are descended from conscripted soldiers. He argues that contemporary records of the Black forces mention "neither the Gnawa, nor a possession ritual, nor even a particular music" (Hell 2002:73). Rather, ancient sources point up "certain 'dances of the blacks' made to the sound of castanets and mention their appropriate 'costumes.' And the diffusion of large populations of black slaves in the countryside as in the towns is well supported prior to the seventeenth century" (Hell 2002:73). Whether or not there are unbroken lines from Isma'il's Black soldiers to established Gnawa troupes, the fact remains that Blackness in Morocco was once associated with an attempt at extra-legal mass enslavement, approved by the crown, and this point is significant not only for Black Moroccans who identify as Gnawa but for other Black Moroccans as well.

WEST AFRICAN ORIGINS

Before continuing into the nineteenth century, we need to describe the place from which many of these enslaved West Africans came. Historical and contemporary ethnographic descriptions are treated in greater detail in Chapter 2. To get closer to the period of the crossing of the ancestors, however, we may consult historian James L.A. Webb Jr.'s *Desert Frontier* (1995), a book that relies on oral history in addition to

exhaustive archival research in order to reconstruct narratives by reading through the prejudices of those who wrote the manuscripts. Webb notes that, with regard to the period 1600-1850, ecological changes in West Africa produced profound political and economic transformations.

In the fourteenth century, Arabs began to migrate south into the Western Sahara. These movements south altered the relations that had previously obtained between the Berber herders and the Sudanic farmers already living there. Cultural transformations that accompanied these changes were profound. Webb argues that during this time there was cultural mixing of lineages, languages, and ethnicities.[6]

In the period prior to 1600, there was a gradual period of increasing humidity in the region prior to 1600 (Webb 1995:5-14). As more rain fell and grass began to grow in formerly arid areas, herders pushed farther north with their animals. Farmers followed them into the former grazing lands in search of new fields to plant crops in. There were parallel ethnic transformations prior to 1600; for example, Berber and Songhay interactions had already begun to transform ethnic identities, with the development of at least one Berber-Soninke dialect. After 1600, the period of increased rainfall was followed by a gradual desiccation of the region. The subsequent reverse movement in human migrations following this ecological transformation had even more profound effects on subsequent historical events and cultural formations.

[6] Webb avoids the use of the term "Arabization" to describe these changes, arguing that its use obscures more than it illuminates (1995:15).

As the crops of the farmers failed and the pastures of the herders became dryer, Arab-Berber herders pushed south toward the now-retreating frontier, establishing their power over areas formerly ruled by the established cities. At the same time, with the introduction of Arabs into the cultural landscape, groups began to identify themselves by the labels "White" and "Black." These labels held salience only in the region where contact took place, along the frontier, and not in other regions. Further, Webb takes care to note that White and Black are "regional cultural constructs which refer to the cultural identities of the two groups . . . rather than to skin color, although individuals affiliated with White groups were in general lighter in complexion (that is, more olive) than those who were Black (more brown)" (Webb 1995:xxv).[7]

Within this unstable context, conflicts occurred between the cities, along with the farmlands within their spheres of influence, on the one hand, and the nomadic raiders of the less-hospitable regions on the other. These conflicts did not reflect random or insignificant ebbs and flows in situational power. Rather, Webb argues, these empires' expansion and contraction followed climatic changes and the cultural and political features of West African society that derived from these changes. As the area became progressively more arid, crops failed cyclically and croplands grew fallow. As a result, the border between the arable land and grazing land moved farther and farther south.

[7] To prevent premature conclusions concerning racialization of these groups, Webb stresses the force of historical construction of these identities; indeed, Webb documents the situational dynamics of the histories of these labels throughout the book. Nevertheless, we can assume that some of the "Arabs" were familiar with contemporary attitudes concerning racialization that were widely held among elite circles in Morocco, as detailed above.

As I explain in the following section, ethnicity in West Africa as described by Webb was malleable, and changes in ethnic identification followed changes in primary patterns of subsistence. Politically, however, the power of the cities waned gradually as those who once held power over the cities—merchants, landowners, and feudal lords—lost that power. Instead, desert chieftains and pastoral nomads became ascendant. In the seventeenth century, power in West Africa shifted as desert militaries swooped down on the cities of the Niger valley.

VOLUNTARY ASSIMILATION AND FORCED MIGRATION

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cultural identities began shifting to reflect this transition, with the resulting demographic changes having profound effects for the future of the region. While the means of production changed, or as the nature of agriculture changed, either the farmers moved south and were replaced by pastoral nomads, or the farmers became transformed into pastoral nomads, in a process of enculturation similar to that described elsewhere by Fredrik Barth (1969) with respect to the Fur and Baggara in Sudan: ethnicity followed the means of subsistence. Fur ethnicity was associated with sedentary agriculture and Baggara identity with pastoral nomadism, and when individuals changed their primary means of subsistence, their primary ethnic identification changed as well. In West Africa, though, the means by which these changes were accomplished varied drastically.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the borderland at the southern edge of the Sahara diverged into two distinct regions, what Webb calls the Southwestern Frontier (1995:27-46) and the Southeastern Frontier (47-67). The Southwestern Frontier can be conceived sociologically as a space (now Mauritania, Senegal, and western Mali) in which various would-be hegemons attempted to coalesce around alliances between White Arab warriors, White Berber nomads, Black nobles, Black farmers, and European colonial and mercantile interests. The key point here is that cultural mixing took place on the Southwestern frontier as a result of these shifting alliances. Most of the conflicts were motivated by control over the slave trade. After 1800, French conquest of the region became more complete and its influence more pervasive and assured.

In contrast, the Southeastern Frontier (today eastern Mali, Niger, and southern Algeria) can be interpreted as the site of three major trends: (1) the fall of Timbuktu after 1591 and the end of Songhay central control, which Webb attributes to desertification; (2) the immigration of Arabs and Berbers into regions that had formerly been dominated by Blacks; and (3) the retreat of some Black populations to the south, amidst the conquest and enslavement of massive numbers of others by the invading White-led armies. In contrast to the Southwestern Frontier (Mauritania, Senegal, and western Mali), the Southeastern Frontier was the site of tremendous political violence, and much less cultural mixing. Greater numbers of blacks in Morocco, particularly in the seventeenth century at the promulgation of Isma'il's edict, were likely to be

descended from populations who were captured and enslaved from the Southeastern Frontier. Meanwhile, the cultural mixing that is evident in their communities after this time speaks to greater influence, in terms of their social organization, from the kinds of assimilation practiced along Southwestern Frontier. It seems to me that the influence of this kind of mixing can be seen today in the position of Gnawa, as Black Moroccans who maintain a separate heritage but who are fully integrated into Moroccan society.

CULTURAL MIXING ALONG THE SOUTHWESTERN FRONTIER

What, specifically, did such cultural mixing look like? One illustration of the particularly local character of social and political events on the Southwestern Frontier—and the mixing that resulted—can be seen in the jihad of Nasir al-Din (c. 1673-1677). Nasir al-Din was a Berber ascetic saint who "wanted the Black riverine and savanna peoples to embrace a stricter, more rigorous adherence to Islamic principles" (Webb 1995:32). Al-Din gained support from among sedentary Black peasants in what is now Senegal who were being oppressed by elites. The forces of his *zawiyya* (religious order) were opposed by a coalition of Black nobles and Arab herders who had united to preserve the status quo, principally tribute paid by the farmers to the nobles. After some initial successes, Nasir al-Din fell in battle in 1674. His attempt to establish a caliphate failed, and the political elites returned to rule (33).

The war has been interpreted in two ways: First, one scholar has argued that the war was caused by "a broad shift in patterns of long-distance trade" (Webb 1995:34);

i.e., the zawiyya forces attacked when they felt threatened by the trade in slaves through the French port of Saint-Louis at the mouth of the Senegal River. The jihad failed because the other side was too strong, and after its fallen charismatic leader could no longer call for its continuation. This reading, we can assume a variation of nationalist or anti-colonialist historiography, argues that the jihad was a Muslim anti-slavery response to French incursions. Webb favors a contrasting interpretation. In Webb's reading, when Nasir al-Din called for an end to gratuitous raids against peasants, his reasons did not include any opposition to the slave trade or any concern that the French were becoming too powerful. Thus the jihad did not fail because its leader died or because the opponents were too strong. Rather, the jihad failed because alliances switched after a curious ethnic transfer had taken place.

A formerly Wolof group, the Ahl Gannaar, had recently become incorporated into the world of desert-based Muslim herders, tied by fictive descent to four Berber groups around 1600 CE. As Muslims, they would remove themselves from being targeted by Muslim slave raiders. At the same time, in allying themselves with the Berber groups, they alienated the Black aristocracies who formerly obtained tribute from them. The conversion to Islam was thus partly motivated by protection from slave raiding, since their adoption into Berber lineages made any slave raiding subject to reprisal. Meanwhile, the assumption of Berber ethnicity marked a tax revolt, since Berbers were exempted from taxation. Nasir al-Din's jihad had originally attempted to overthrow the Black aristocrats of the region. Despite its eventual failure, however, it

actually accomplished the breaking of Wolof aristocratic power over parts of the northern Wolof territories that had formerly been under Wolof control. These aristocrats were now replaced by Berber tribal leaders, but the new leaders did not tax the former Black farmers because these were now incorporated into the Berber tribal structure.

It appears most likely that the largest expansion in numbers of black Moroccans through slavery came from slave raiding along the Southeastern Frontier and into regions farther south of this frontier, such as what is today Burkina Faso and northern Nigeria. Slaves also came from a Sahara-wide trade in slaves from all over Africa south of the Sahara. Nevertheless, features of black Moroccan social organization and identity (Arabic language, Berber cultural patterns and lineages, Muslim religion) suggest changes in social organization that resemble what happened along the Southwestern frontier.

HARATIN: NON-GNAWA BLACK MOROCCANS

There are many Black Moroccans, and few of them identify as Gnawa. With regard to one of these minority populations, El Hamel argues that the *Haratin*, a racial minority living in southern Morocco, "are not freed slaves and their descendents" (2002:39). Rather, El Hamel argues, the Haratin are descended from Blacks who have lived in Morocco "since time immemorial" (2002:39). Hell supports this argument, noting that slavery is not the only origin of Blacks in North Africa. Hell appeals to biological evidence of two "types of populations" residing in North Africa in Neolithic

times, "one presenting Mediterranean characteristics, the other specifically Negroid traits" (2002:73). He corroborates this physical evidence with archeological evidence that there were "western Ethiopians" (in the words of Pliny the Elder) throughout North Africa in classical times. Like the indigenous Berbers, Hell argues, "Blacks can thus be considered as a native population of Southern Morocco" (Hell 2002:73).

Muhammad Ennaji disagrees with this conclusion. He accepts the etymology of "Haratin" as being derived from something like *al-harar al-thani*, literally a "second freeman." Haratin, he argues, are

> literally second-class citizens. In the legal terminology of the day, a "remnant of servitude" continued to contaminate their status. In theory, once slaves acquired their liberty, they were free to enjoy in immediately, with the full legal capacities of the free-born; however, they and their male descendants actually remained in a client-patron relationship (*al-wala'*) with the man or woman who had freed them, or with their families. Patrons, patronesses, and their male blood relations took the place of the slaves' family relations, in cases in which the slaves had none of their own, especially in supervising marriage choices and in collectively suffered legal sanctions. In addition, if freed persons or their male-line descendents [sic] died without male heirs, their possessions reverted to the patron or the patron's male blood relations: religious law equated patronage with kinship. (Ennaji 1999:56)

Whether all the Haratin are descended from freed slaves, or whether some freed slaves joined indigenous Haratin communities, it is probably impossible to know. It is certain that freed slaves faced numerous challenges in determining their status as freed, and they also faced everyday challenges of survival. Any segments of the Haratin who had always been free faced similar, albeit lesser, challenges in determining their status in Berber-dominated parts of southern Morocco, where they were excluded from important decisions on the basis of their skin color and their lack of ownership of the land which they cultivated as tenant farmers. In the everyday struggle for survival, free-born Haratin and free Black slaves were no doubt exactly equal.

Haratin have typically been considered to be tenant farmers existing at the very lowest economic rungs of society. Indeed, one Black Moroccan I met in Marrakech in 2006 glossed the word *haratin* for me in English. We were walking together in the madina. When he called out a greeting to a friend, he used the expression *malik al-haratin*, "King of the Haratin." "Do you know what this word means?" he asked me. "In English, it means nigger." He went on to explain that he could use the term because he himself was one of the Haratin, as the man he was playfully calling to, but I should never use it on the street, because it was offensive. This story suggests not only that the word is offensive enough to be considered an insult and that these people are considered to be at the lowest levels of southern Moroccan society, but also that insiders may be reclaiming the pejorative name for use within their community. My friend had been orphaned at a young age and grew up on the streets of Marrakech in abject poverty, but

by dint of hard and a bit of good fortune was now, like the man to whom he had called, a prosperous business owner.

In recent years, Haratin living in oases in the south of Morocco have seen a gradual rise in their standard of living. In his political ecology of an oasis in Errachidia Province, Hsain Ilahiane (2004) reveals a black Haratin population that existed for generations at the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder, working as sharecroppers on land owned by resident Arabs and Berbers from the higher strata. Through their hard work but also their expertise in agriculture—Ilahiane demonstrates that the plots worked by the Haratin tended to be more productive—and through remittances sent by community members working in Europe, some members of this socioeconomic class/ethnic group have seen their incomes rise through the strategic purchase of land and trees. Moreover, this rise in wealth has "allowed Haratin to appropriate what is essentially a Berber/Arab cultural capital of *al-asl* or a sense of rootedness and belonging (being anchored in land: *al-asl*)" (Ilahiane 2004:173). The term is tied to land ownership in southern Morocco; in Standard Arabic, *asl* has a more general sense, and in Morocco more generally it is also tied to blood.[8] Ennaji places the Haratin at the bottom of a social ladder in nineteenth-century southern Morocco that included *shorfa* (nobles), *igurramen* (members of saintly lineages), and *ahrar* (literally "freemen"). He confirms that, as they were "barred access to land ownership, they could not take root in

[8] Kapchan, personal communication. Shannon (2001:285) found that in Syria *asl* represented origin, root, or lineage. The related adjective *asil* brought in the related concepts of authentic and pure, which then were nominalized, in *asala*, to result in authenticity, rootedness, and purity of descent. Thus relations between rootedness, heredity, and purity are intertwined through the use of the term.

the region or legitimize their presence as citizens with full economic and social rights" (Ennaji 1999:60).

For the Haratin, who have lived in that area "for time immemorial," it is completely unexpected that they should feel to have been lacking *asala* in the land. This feeling of "not belonging" is no doubt connected to their class position and lack of ownership over the land, but a case could also be made that at least a portion their unease comes from Isma'il's attempted enslavement, alongside subsequent effects. It should be noted that, in Ilahiane's valuable contribution, class advancement was seen as a means to land ownership, which in turn conferred a sense of belonging among black Moroccans whose continuous residence in Morocco has never been in question, but whose Moroccan identity has been, due to the slave trade and Isma'il attempted enslavement.

BLACK RESISTANCE TO CONSCRIPTION

In 1699, according to El Hamel, Haratin in Fes directly opposed the conscription order: They "refused to accepted the servile status … attributed to them and hence refused to submit to the order of the Sultan" (2002:45). In Tetouan, a city in the mountainous Rif region of northern Morocco, Haratin refugees took sanctuary at the shrine of Ibn Mashish. Moreover, the Muslim *'ulama* (sing. *'alim*, "learned man"), the religious and legal authorities, did not overwhelmingly support the Sultan at first. One of these judges, 'Abd al-Salam Jassus, even issued a *fatwa*, a legally binding statement,

that disputed the legality of the state's enslavement of Muslims. When Jassus refused to rescind the fatwa, Isma'il ordered his execution. These acts of resistance establish the continuity of opposition to the state, at the time of the enslavement order. I point this out in order to correct a shortcoming noted by Fox and Starn (1997), termed "newness" scholarship. In speaking of the recentness of modern trends like "resistance," such scholarship denies their historical continuity. The following few sections trace resistance, Black and otherwise, through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

SLAVERY AND RACE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In *Serving the Master*, Mohammed Ennaji presents a social and cultural history detailing the daily lives of slaves in nineteenth-century Morocco. He presents their family structures, means of escape and emancipation, the practice of kidnapping slaves and free people for sale into slavery, the often-illegal trade in slaves, and the lives of government slaves from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. Moroccan society faced steadily increasing encroachment from European powers, especially France and Spain, which culminated in conquest after 1912. Such external pressure as was exerted coincided with a steady decline in the ability of the state to provide security and welfare to the Moroccan populace. In the words of one Moroccan historian, the nineteenth century was "the most immoral of times" (Ennaji 1999:77). Much of its immorality was visible in the condition of Moroccan slaves.

It has been established that racialization in the Arab and Muslim Middle East drew most notably on the presence of slaves, most of whom were of African origins. The situation was such that, as early as the eleventh century, widespread stereotypes fixed White and Black identities, equated Blackness with enslavement, and held Black people to be naturally inferior to Whites. By the nineteenth century in Morocco, while enslavement was not limited exclusively to Black people, it was identified with them to the extent that most free Black people (as well as many people of lighter complexion who lacked powerful allies) were perpetually faced with potential enslavement.

The point should be made that such enslavement bore little resemblance to situations in the New World: Slaves in the Middle East were often well-educated, highly trained, and trusted members of society with a modicum of legal status. They were selected on the basis of their education and intelligence: In 1843 an Egyptian slave owner instructed his purchaser to "look for youth, together with cleverness, intelligence, and aptitude for education and physical exercise" (Ennaji 1999:11). Only a minority of slaves, especially those newly arrived, were used in unskilled labor. Women were trained in music and cooking, but men trained in a wide variety of disciplines: military, construction, crafts, horticulture, scholarship, accounting, law, and religion (Ennaji 1999:14-15). Despite such opportunities for most slaves, though, some slaves were tremendously overworked, usually the recently arrived who had few marketable skills and were useful only at unskilled labor, typically in the fields and at very risky tasks (Ennaji 1999:26-28). Despite laws that prescribed emancipation for any victim or cruel

and inhumane treatment, many slaves were treated with inhuman levels of cruelty and violence, and even some of those who were not mistreated still tried to escape and to gain control over their own lives.

The slave markets produced much of this dissatisfaction, since they broke up families. Many slaves had no sense of who their fathers were—if an owner were acknowledged as the father of the slave, that was tantamount to legally freeing the slave, so owners took care to obscure a slave's paternity as much as possible (Ennaji 1999:35, 40). This situation, alongside the violence that sales often exerted in family relationships, resulted in stripping the personhood of slaves. Ennaji notes that "slaves very often had no family names, for the simple reason that they had no family. ... They changed names often, on their masters' whims, at each new sale. ... Such enforced rootlessness, the lack of even a proper name, was a humiliation with few modern equivalents" (Ennaji 1999:36). Traders and owners often traded in slaves whose status was suspect. They changed the names of the slaves on paper in order to obscure their identities, should family members file lawsuits against them.

In theory, female slaves who were intended to be concubines were supposed to be separate from those intended for domestic service, but in practice masters were free to rape their female slaves at will (Ennaji 1999:37). There was also a legal ban on the sale of pregnant slaves, because concubines were supposed to be bearing their masters' children, who were legally considered to be freeborn Muslims. In practice, however, there were plenty of pregnant slaves for sale in the markets (Ennaji 1999:37). Ennaji

quotes on slave owner, a "mountain tribesman," bragging at his profits from selling his own children from his valuable female slave: "She gives me more pleasure than two wives, and more profit than four cows. I get her pregnant every nine months, and when the child is four or five years old, I take him to the city, where I get a good price for him" (Ennaji 1999:37). So much for Lewis' assertion that the bonds of Islamic law effectively limited the supply of slaves through natural increase. Such evidence may serve to give pause concerning numerous other broad statements about the universal improvement of the status of slaves after the rise of Islam.

In the nineteenth century slaves were brought from West Africa, but Ennaji also presents surprising and disturbing evidence that many free Muslim Moroccans, presumably mostly Black, were also kidnapped and sold into slavery. It is logical to assume that, prior to being taken, such people were economically and socially disadvantaged. Upon being seized and quickly sold, either by criminals or merely by ordinary folk who saw an opportunity and took it, the victims came to represent a considerable investment for a wealthy and powerful man. As a result, even if their family members were able to find them, there were few avenues to pursue. Ennaji recounts a story told to him by one of his consultants (Ennaji 1999:65). The man had been born far away, but he had come to live in his present town as a child after his two sisters were kidnapped and sold into slavery. Their father eventually tracked them down to the home of a government official, but it proved impossible to get them back. The only thing he was able to do was to go back and bring the rest of his family to live in

that city, just so they could be near to the girls. They never left. Such evidence leads me to conclude that debates over the origins of the Haratin could be misguided. If such conditions prevailed at times during the centuries between around 1600 and 1920, presumably free individuals could have been enslaved, their descendants freed, and then re-enslaved and freed again, all within a few generations.

Ennaji's work contributes to this project not only by speaking on the general conditions of enslavement and emancipation, and thus to a primary factor of racialization in Moroccan society; it also comments directly on the historical remnants of Mulay Isma'il's Black Guard, the *'Abid al-Bukhari*. According to Ennaji, the Black Guard were still around during the nineteenth century, and their numbers were even augmented during this time. Such augmentation was more successful in the South than in the North. For example, in 1837 the Sultan failed in his attempt to recruit, from descendants of the *'Abid al-Bukhari*, "the racially pure among them, those who have remained in a state of Bedouin simplicity ... and who are more trustworthy and serious" (Ennaji 1999:7). Ten years later, the same Sultan tried again in the North, with a target number of 500 boys between the ages of two and four. He failed again in the North, but state efforts at recruitment in the South were much more successful. Ennaji cites a report of 621 Haratin being taken in 1837. The numbers were augmented by runaway slaves, and the state also secretly bought slaves in the markets. Hasan I (reigned 1873-1894) also sought sources for his modernizing army from among Black communities in

the Sous; "some clans went so far as to procure slave contingents to replace the free men they had to furnish for army expeditions" (Ennaji 1999:7).

Within the often-dismal social conditions of everyday life in nineteenth-century Morocco, enslavement was sometimes a fate better than death. Especially during times of extreme crisis, such as the drought and famine of 1878-1879, desperate people did desperate things. One witness describes how "People cried out, revolted, and came close to eating one another. Men fled their brothers, mothers, and fathers. Fathers sold their children" (Ennaji 1999:80). The Sultan himself wrote that the people of the Sous "are selling their children in order to eat" (Ennaji 1999:80). The selling of children into slavery was an established survival strategy during extreme famines, and Ennaji cites Leo Africanus as having observed the phenomenon during a famine in the sixteenth century. These were unnatural, even apocalyptic times, and took place under situations of nearly total breakdown in the ordinary functioning of society. The nineteenth century was similar, although the situation was never as dire as was the case in the sixteenth century. However, during this time the protection offered by the state and the religious orders was largely limited to the cities (Ennaji 1999:81). In isolated parts of the countryside, poor people could find themselves in very similar situations, forced to sell a child into slavery in order to keep the rest of the family alive for a few more days (Ennaji 1999:82). Faced with enslavement by private owners or the state, the state was much to be preferred. Such slaves were considered "Slaves of the Makhzen," owned by the government.

Slaves of the Makhzen were among the most privileged slaves in the nineteenth century, but not all Makhzen slaves were equal. One's situation depended on proximity to the royal cities and the palace, on training, on education, etc. Even within the palace compound there were slaves who existed on the margins, half-starved and poorly housed. Nevertheless, Makhzen slaves were entitled to receive an allowance and professional training (Ennaji 1999:91). The Black Guard (*'Abid al-Bukhari*) are documented as having been so well-off that a group of them privately hired a Qur'an tutor to teach their children. They also received bonuses each year. Certain well-placed Makhzen slaves requested and received bribes in order to facilitate access to official power. The state provided some slaves with domestic servants, passage to Mecca for the pilgrimage, and usufruct concessions. Their daughters often married well. One region where Makhzen slaves were not treated well, however, was the South, particularly the Tafilalet (Ennaji 1999:92-93). Some veterans, recruited as slaves and having rendered their military service, could retire as free men and become farmers, some even enjoying tax-exempt status. Overall, the *'Abid al-Bukhari* slaves "stood on completely different legal ground from slaves of private citizens. Their de facto liberty came outside the usual channels of emancipation; service to the State granted them this dispensation" (Ennaji 1999:95). This special status actually seems very similar to the original justification for their original creation by Mulay Isma'il: In contrast to *harar* (freeman), slaves of Makhzen were known by the term *wazif*, which means state-owned slave (something akin to "servant" in the sense of "civil servant"). As indicating a

professional class external to the social structure of clan and lineage, Ennaji explains, the term *wazif*

> came to mean a particular category of the government's servants, a group characterized by servile origins, but also by lack of clan connections. Unlike the soldiers of the Makhzen recruited everywhere, "who are unstable, and always keep one eye turned to their home regions," *wazfan* had eyes only for the state, to whose service they devoted body and soul. (Ennaji 1999:95-96)

Thus toward the end of the nineteenth century, as at the beginning of the eighteenth, we see Black slaves and Black Moroccans continuing to serve in mediatory roles. At both times, Black soldiers simultaneously provide to the sovereign an external means to deflect resistance, to the potentially restive powerful forces among the ruled an external frustration for their designs on influence over the sovereign. The major difference between 1699 and the nineteenth century appears to be that in 1699, at a time when Moroccan society was vibrant and functioning, enslavement was an onerous burden. In contrast, during the difficult years of the late nineteenth century, government enslavement was at least a reliable means of putting food on the table.

EUROPEAN CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE

More recent resistance movements have not been identified that tied Blackness to an oppositional stance vis-à-vis the state, apart from slaves escaping their owners, which Ennaji considers to be a primary form of resistance (1999:49). Nevertheless,

popular uprisings against the various powers that be are broadly characteristic of the Moroccan populace from the classical period (Laroui 1977:47ff.), through the Muslim empires (Cornell 1998), and into the colonial Gellner 1981:194ff.) and post-colonial periods (Slyomovics 2005). In one example, Laroui (1977:318) relates the story of how, in 1859, a Spanish army of 50,000 advanced on Tetuan to take the city, which was defended by 5,600 royal troops. Guerilla bands sprang up from the local populace to resist the Spanish, slowing their advance. The sultan thought it best to negotiate with the Spanish, but the guerilla bands resisted this move, preferring to fight. When the Spanish army arrived at Tetuan the "defending" soldiers threw open the gates, and the city fell. Meanwhile, the guerilla bands' attacks on the Spanish army continued *after* it had "invaded" Tetuan. The sultan took back Tetuan only after, two year later, it paid the Spanish a 20 million douro indemnity financed in part by English bank loans that were guaranteed by Moroccan customs receipts.

Such conquest through finance, in spite of popular opposition, is well documented. French and Spanish policies in Morocco involved the foreign purchase or unpaid transfer of property, as well as "divide and rule" policies and de-education. After military maneuvers took place during 1907-1912 near Oujda and Casablanca, the owners fled their property. A 1913 law induced by the French government enabled the foreign ownership of land, which led to result 30,000 hectares of this land being transferred to European ownership. A 1919 law ordered the comprehensive survey of collectively owned lands in order to begin the task of transferring these to colonial

ownership. After 1927, even privately owned lands were taken by the throne and ceded to the Europeans, at very high levels, as suggested by Laroui's number for a single two-year period in the Tadla alone: 62,000 hectares (Laroui 1977:330-331). After a 1914 "Berber policy" law went into effect, all majority Berber-speaking regions were removed from the authority of the Moroccan throne. Finally, quranic schools were either shuttered by the French or allowed to die out and not replaced with French schools. By 1939, only 2 percent of Moroccan children were attending school (Laroui 1977:342).

Outright warfare took place against the Spanish during the well-known "Rif War" of 1920-1926 led by 'Abd al-Karim (Laroui 1977:351). The level of European involvement in the effort to put down the rebellion shows how significant and widespread Moroccan resistance to the Europeans was. In 1921 at the battle of Anoual, the rebels captured 200 cannons and 700 prisoners, including a general; they also killed 19,000 Spanish troops. In order to finally put down the rebellion, France and Spain had to send 500,000 troops supported by 44 air force squadrons. Across the Maghrib generally, there were three additional pre-colonial periods of intense agitation, in 1937-1938, 1945-1949, and 1951-1954 (Laroui 1977:367).

OPPOSITION TO OPPRESSION

Susan Slyomovics (2005) documents the history of human rights protests in Morocco since 1912, paying close attention to the "days of lead," the period of intense

state oppression between 1965 and the late 1980s. Slyomovics isolates the city of Casablanca (2005:105ff.) to demonstrate just how central oppressive living conditions for workers—and courageous acts to make known and change those conditions—are to the city's and the nation's history. A 1905 riot against a French building project led lent justification to increased French efforts at "protecting" European investments through eventual colonization of Morocco. French investment in Casablanca (a very minor and thus synthetic city in Morocco prior to 1900) resulted in the population growing from 12,000 in 1913 to 111,000 in 1920. By the 1950s, these rapidly urbanized working poor, feeling trapped as in a "prison" (107) began to mount a series of numerous violent acts against colonial rule. These acts coalesced around general uprisings in 1952 and 1955, leading directly to independence in 1956.

After Moroccan independence, opposition to the government was curtailed due to the direct control the Hassan II government held over Moroccan society, particularly after 1970. The government's status as a stalwart supporter of the West and particularly the United States during the Cold war led to a police state maintained through a network of spies that meted harsh repression against any direct opposition, which was accomplished through the 1970s and 1980s only at great cost to the lives of activists and their families (Slyomovics 2005).

The ascension to the throne of Muhammad VI in 1999 led to a considerable expansion in the means by which citizens could express dissent. On the one hand, the state power was dominated by the *makhzin* (Ar. "storehouse"), a political structure

centered around the throne that held real power over the key ministries of justice, interior, and Islamic and foreign affairs. On the other hand, elected and appointed representatives headed by a prime minister, served in a parliament that oversaw less strategic ministries such as commerce, education, and health. Direct action was noted in the public protests of the Graduates group, a collective from among the 100,000 unemployed recent graduates from state schools, who publicly protested the lack of jobs in 2001 and 2002. It should be noted that this group never addressed its grievances to the king but rather to the Parliament. In 2001 Abdeslam Maghraoui characterized the prospects for democratic change in Morocco as "weak" (Maghraoui 2001:17). Nevertheless, the continued presence of such an in-between social movement (Fox and Starn 1997) could only have become possible under a less-restrictive regime.

RESISTANCE AND ACCOMMODATION

Fox and Starn (1997) call for the analysis of resistance, dissent, and direct action, as well as cultural consumption under capitalist regimes of signification. Identifying resistance within cultural consumption should be a relatively straightforward process, along the lines of the various projects of the Birmingham School, such as the work of Dick Hebdige (1979). What Fox and Starn would call everyday resistance—weapons of the weak—is well established as being expressed through consumption of popular media—for Hebdige (1979), when progressive white youth opposed reactionary ones in 1970s London came to interact with black youth

listening to reggae, they were led to develop punk music. The efforts of scholars like Fox and Starn, in turn, have lent credence to the contention that anthropologists over the past few years have been "looking for resistance in everything"—often the mistake results from an overly mechanistic interpretation of Gramscian theory, which posits the always-already existence of anti-hegemonic impulses within the hegemonic system (Bennett 1981). In this case, it is more useful to draw on Antonio Melucci's theory of "movement networks" (1985). Under the conditions of social organization since the 1960s, people may form loose movement networks around cultural symbols. These networks may or may not give rise to or transform into movements periodically at times of crisis; the essential point is that they encourage others to participate in these networks. These social actors may belong to multiple networks, they may be militant only partially and for a short period, and they tend to become personally and affectively identified with and implicated in the groups (Melucci 1985, 1996). In Morocco, we can focus on determining the kinds of music Moroccan youth and others producing and consuming Gnawa music listen to—reggae, rap, heavy metal—and particularly how strongly they identify with others who do so. This affective identification might lead to the formation of networks surrounding these identities, indicating some potential for a movement network. As Melucci points out, the medium of the network is the message they present: a new form of challenge to pre-existing cultural codes.

BLACKNESS IN MOROCCAN POPULAR CULTURE

Despite the presence of Blacks in Morocco, Mulay Isma'il's black mother was, nevertheless, a slave of his father who had been brought from West Africa. Hell contends that the story "is not a gratuitous anecdote." Instead, it can be interpreted as recurring evidence of a theme of "biological mixing" which reveals the "closeness of relations that have united Morocco with Black Africa over the course of centuries" (Hell 2002:76). An effect of this situational identification is that skin color and lineage really do not determine who becomes a Gnawa adept. Blackness is an origin of Gnawa identity, but not a necessary element. Nevertheless, if Blacks really are "native" to Morocco, why do they have feelings of being out of place? Why specifically are blacks so excluded? Berbers have also felt excluded, no doubt a colonial legacy of "divide and rule," but they appear to express ownership over their indigeneity more successfully. Why do some black Moroccans not express similar ownership with greater success? The historical explanations of the slave trade, which produced an immigrant blackness, and the forced conscription by Mulay Isma'il (oppression and separation) contribute to this alienation. Ultimately, however, for the answers to such questions we must look to nationalist historiography—the development of a Moroccan nation that considers itself Arab—and thus we look to cultural history. What is the place of Blackness in Moroccan society? In particular, what is the role of race in popular culture and the public imaginary in Morocco?

We can find intriguing indications in the development of Moroccan popular culture. The development of a domestic market for Gnawa music by the end of the 20th century was neither anomalous, gratuitous, nor coincidental. Instead, we can determine that race played a primary role in the development of markets for Moroccan popular music in the twentieth century, beginning at least with the songs of Houcine Slaoui, the first Moroccan musician to record in Paris, for Pathe-Marconi. Slaoui captured popular attitudes of the 1930s and 1940s, and he held the Moroccan North and particularly Tangier in high regard. His son Muhammad lived in Tangier in the 1960s and 1970s, performing for and with some of the international celebrities vacationing there. But Houcine Slaoui himself died of a mysterious illness in 1951 at the age of 33. It is remarkable that he mad such a strong and lasting impression in the Moroccan popular imagination while still in his twenties.

Slaoui was a professional musician, first making a name for himself as a traveling singer and performer in *halqas*, the performance sections of Moroccan marketplaces. He was an innovator in the instruments he used, the musical influences of which he took advantage, and the topical nature of his songs (Fuson 2007). At least two of Slaoui's best-loved songs speak to physical appearance. The first is properly titled "Azin Oualain" (*al-zin wa al-'ayn*, "The Beautiful and the [Blue-]Eyed"), although the song is often better known as known as "Lmirikan" ("The Americans") or "Tsma' ghir uke uke" ("You Just Hear Okay, Okay," from the chorus). The second song is "Yal cahla" (*ya al-kahla*, "O Black Woman") (*Hocine Slaoui: 20 Annees de succes*).

According to Jamila Bargach (1999), when "Azin Oualain" speaks of the power of "the beautiful and the blue-eyed," it conducts a sardonic commentary on the racism of the American soldiers who arrived in Casablanca in 1942 and went looking for prostitutes, who came from the popular classes and tended to have darker complexions. At the same time that it comments on American racism, the song works more subtly to reveal a Moroccan social hierarchy that kept the intermarrying urban elites lighter-skinned while relegating overwhelming numbers of rural-to-urban migrants—most of them darker-featured—to the bottom of the social ladder (Bargach 1999). Thus both the American soldiers *and* Moroccans more generally were seeking out "beautiful" partners who tend toward light skin and "blue eyes."

In "Yal Cahla," meanwhile, Slaoui uses what might be deemed offensive language to describe a black woman, a young domestic servant. The lyrics speak of a woman whose "kinky hair gets tangled up" (*sha'ar mkerded taytkhebbel*), whose "strong body odor stinks to high heaven" (*snanha ya'ti bi-nahar*), and who "snores like a buzz-saw" (*shkhirha kif el menshar*) (Boucetta 2006:66). These lyrics appear to be offensive and racist. However, based on photographs of Slaoui, it is clear that he himself had brown skin and kinky hair. Slaoui himself was Black! While this in itself should not excuse racism in his lyrics, it does shed light on Slaoui's self-positioning vis-a-vis anti-Black racial stereotyping. Further, the song's offensiveness is not fully established, since Casablanca singer-songwriter Barry reprised the song on a 2006 album, most likely intending the song as a tribute to the hundreds of thousands of young

women and girls working as maids in the great houses and upscale apartments of the Moroccan cities (for a discuss of maids in Moroccan society see Kapchan 1996:212-234). Slaoui performed for years before recording his first records, and he had to go to Paris to make those recordings. Slaoui's continued influence suggests that, although Moroccan audiences have become taken since the mid-1990s with Gnawa music as an indigenous style that operates as a local symbol of Africa and blackness in Morocco (Swedenburg N.D.), the current popularity of Gnawa music operates within an economy of commercially commoditized Blackness—mediated through European technologies and networks—that has been sustained successfully in Morocco at least for the better part of the past century.

If Houcine Slaoui's genius was revealed in his stereotyped position of Black entertainer, the 1960s and 1970s opened a new position: protest singer. Nass el-Ghiwane, identified by no less than Martin Scorcese as "The Rolling Stones of Africa," are nothing of the sort. Rather, the original quartet was formed when four men from the working-class Casablanca suburb of Hayy al-Muhammadi insisted on arranging traditional folk songs and playing all-acoustic sets on traditional instruments. If anything, Nass el-Ghiwane might be seen within a US pop context as mixing the intellectual folk enthusiasm of Bob Dylan or Joan Baez with the national popular affection felt for Elvis Presley or Johnny Cash. The band was very successful, even dominant domestically and with fans in the wider Arab world, throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In its latest incarnation, returning two original members, Nass el-Ghiwane

remained a pricy concert ticket in 2006. (I saw them in a dinner concert in 2001 in a Rabat shopping mall.) After the first album in the late 1970s, one member left and was replaced with Abderrahman Paco.

Paco, or Baca in Arabic, was the stage name of Abderrahmane Qirouch, a young Gnawi m'allim born in 1948 in Essaouira (Sadiq 2006). Sporting a flamboyant afro, Paco introduced the *hajhuj*, the three-stringed Gnawa bass lute also known as a *ginbri*, to the Moroccan pop stage and Gnawa songs to the national consciousness in the 1980s. For example, the Paco-written songs "Zad el Hem" and "Mahmouma" feature not only the "slap-bass" style of hajhuj-playing at the beginning of the tracks, but also a rising tempo that increases rapidly and reaches a crescendo toward the end of the track. A resonant bass line and a frenetic crescendo both appear to index Gnawa music for Moroccan audiences.

In the lyrics to "Mahmouma" we hear more of the typical disapproval for the modern breakdown of civility in everyday interaction such as we heard from Slaoui, Paco sadly remarking that "today there is no more respect, neither for faith nor for religion" (Sadiq 2006: 125-126, my translation). But the anger goes deeper as the lyrics focus on admittedly ill defined but centrally located targets: "Aren't the prisons filled with sad boys? Don't men die victims of arbitrary actions? Haven't public places and houses been perverted? Our good advice forgotten, our mouths gagged, the hand of the tyrant is tattooed on all our faces. ... Wait no more for this world that died a long time ago." This is indeed strongly worded protest in a police state. In 1971 and 1972 two

major attempts were made on the life of the king, Hassan II. The second of the attempts was led by Hassan's closest friend and military commander, General Oufkir. Hassan's pain at the betrayal ran deep. As a result, for the next 15 years the entire country was plunged into "l'annees de plomb," the years of lead, during which thousands of the regime's political opponents were beaten, imprisoned, and even murdered (Slyomovics 2005). Not until the 1990s did many Moroccans begin again to breathe freely. When I visited Tetouan in 2001, a city of the mountainous northern region of the Rif, I followed closely on the heels of a visit by Hassan's son, newly instated King Muhammad VI, whose mother was a Berber from the Rif. I was told then that his visit had been the first visit to the Rif by a Moroccan monarch since the 1970s, retribution for perceived Riffian support of Oufkir during the native son's attempted coup (McMurray 2001). Despite the political repression, however, popular music of the 1970s and 1980s that was "conscious" tended to involve veiled political commentary. Fans of the music could relate their mutual interest in the songs and discuss their meanings without overtly criticizing the government.

While the lyrics of Mahmouma update Slaoui for the years of lead, the sound is pure Gnawa. In 1998 the first Gnawa music festival was held in Paco's hometown of Essaouira. I attended in 2001, 2002, and 2006. At the most recent event around half a million people traveled to the windy beach resort, North Africa's wind-surfing capital, for five days of free concerts on three large stages and a dozen smaller ones. More than anything, the Essaouira festival has worked to popularize Gnawa music in Morocco (see

Chapter 4). It also serves as a site for fans of Gnawa music to meet one another and form longer-lasting networks.

Morocco is an African country, but its proximity to Europe and its Arab heritage serve to destabilize identification with Africa among Moroccans. Meanwhile, three centuries of European colonialism have obscured the centrality of trans-Saharan trade and interactions for at least the preceding 700 years. It is my intention to draw attention to this neglected history as a call to memory of alternatives to European-dominated narratives of Moroccan and West African indigeneity and locality—to propose a kind of globalization from below (Stokes 2004) and outside the European-dominated circuit of world-systems theory (Abu-Lughod 1989; Cornell 1990). This project demands the practice of a peculiar art of timing (Fabian 1998), and it also cannot escape entirely the bounds of European ways of seeing and knowing, particularly since my access to knowledge about cultural patterns in West Africa and North Africa is largely drawn from ethnographic accounts conducted under conditions themselves largely determined by colonial relations, even in those cases when the ethnographers cast themselves in opposition to the colonial enterprise—Rouch, for example, as well as most anthropologists working since the 1980s. Certainly, the topic of colonialism raises questions surrounding capitalism and modernity, questions that I have briefly raised here but that I explore further in the following chapter. The continuous thread through this chapter has been the place of race and in particular the position of Blackness in the Moroccan imagination. As I explain in the following chapter, Blackness is central not

only to Moroccan imaginaries but to global imaginaries as well, particularly the institution of Modernism.

SLAVERY, RUPTURE, AND CONTINUITY

The history of the "two banks" of the Sahara desert speaks of continuous and deep relationships of trade, migration, and conquest. Most significant of these interactions, for the purpose of this project, is the trans-Saharan slave trade, which peaked between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The historical and cultural continuity of the Gnawa communities can be traced to several causes, among them labor specialization and powerful social structures, which produced cohesive community bonds across the centuries. Thus is evoked the idea that West Africa and North Africa are not bounded units but rather a complex region mediated across the Sahara Desert and maintained through cultural flows on a super-regional scale (Tsing 2002:473).

Given Webb's evidence, it is small wonder that, when the peasants were attacked and their societies destroyed, cultural continuity was severely constrained and transformed. Whenever the point is raised that Gnawa often are unable to specify the precise geographical or ethnic origin of their ancestors, it is seen as evidence of an absolute rupture. Despite the near absence of lineages to West African origins for many black Moroccans, there are not only cultural continuities but also a significant number of them who do have such lineages, including the Sudanis of Essaouira. This Gnawa

family of mfiallims is descended from an ancestor who made the trip across the Sahara early in the last century. Namir (1998) reports the words of Hajub "Gubani" Sudani:

> My father was named M'Barek and was a native of Chnafou in Sudan from where he was abducted and sold in the Sahara, while my mother was originally from Bamako in Mali... Me, I was born in Essaouira in 1923... Since 1985, I have been Moqadem of the zawia of the Gnawa. In 1987, I was designated as Moqadem of the taifa of the Gnawa of Essaouira. (ellipses in original; Namir 1998:para. 3)

M'allim Gubani went on to become one of leaders who authorized the Gnawa festival and the popularization of the cultural heritage of Morocco's Black populations.

The history of interactions across the Sahara speaks to long-term interactions that continue to be felt in the culture of West Africa, even after a colonial attempt to reorient economies and ties of identity to the coasts and ultimately Europe. European cultural forms continue to mediate West Africans' engagement with North Africa and the Arab World, through France in the case of Francophone countries through Britain in the case of Anglophone countries. Nevertheless, we can look for continued cross-fertilization of cultural and social forms to continue, as well as race and specifically Blackness playing a mediating role in transnational cultural flows. These flows have taken place under the conditions of capitalist modernity and globalization, and the roots of changes in these flows can be linked directly and indirectly to the history of

racialization within Morocco. Such a history of the racialization of one subculture, the Gnawa, details the often-contradictory paths that modernity has taken in Morocco.

Chapter 2: Scholarly Approaches to Gnawa, Morocco, and West Africa

A SYNTHESIS OF GNAWA SCHOLARSHIP

Gnawa scholarship has gone through several generations. There were some early mentions of Black street musicians, for example by Westermarck (1968), first published in 1926. However, it was not until the 1970s that academic books and articles began to be devoted to the Gnawa. In his book on the Hamadsha (1973), Crapanzano discusses the Gnawa briefly alongside the ‘Issawa. The greatest contributions of the 1970s and 1980s, however, came from Paques, Lapassade, and Diouri. This heritage of scholarship helps show how scholarly approaches to the Gnawa have not only reflected the racialization undergone by the Gnawa but in some cases have also contributed to the construction of racialized identities. An analysis of the history of scholarship on the Gnawa in Morocco illustrates how changes have taken place in scholarly representations of Moroccan society, including the religious landscape.

Viviana Paques was trained in the rigorous ethnographic methodology of Germaine Dieterlen and Marcel Griaule, students of Marcel Mauss who pioneered long-term fieldwork among the Dogon in West Africa in the 1940s and 1950s. Her early writing on the Gnawa (1975, 1979) was an outgrowth of her interest in West African cosmology. Her great contribution did not come until 1991, when a large volume was released that characterized her approach. In addition to describing the Gnawa ceremony, though, the book also made statements that made the best sense within the context of

Griaulian anthropology, concerning the relationship between Gnawa beliefs and pan-West African ethnocosmology and ethno-astronomy. Many of these conclusions seemed controversial and a bit difficult to defend by Gnawa I spoke with, or even to understand.

Simultaneously, Abdelhai Diouiri wrote a doctoral thesis under the direction of Roland Barthes at the University of Paris (Diouiri 1979). Diouiri's arguments concerning writing and trance were largely in conversation with other European philosophers and literary theorists, but his examples from Gnawa belief and practice constitute a rich trove of data. Finally, Georges Lapassade (1982), a sociologist with an abiding interest in ethnopsychiatry, analyzed the practical applications that trance-dancing and possession held for Gnawa.

In the 1990s, as Gnawa music was attracting popular attention, scholars sensed a neglected corner of Moroccan society and began to look more closely. The most important scholars of the 1990s are Hell (1999, 2002) and Chlyeh (1998, 1999). Bertrand Hell, a student of Paques, approached Gnawa culture is quite a different manner. His earlier published work focused on shamanism of Central Asia, although he was working since the 1970s with Gnawa m'allims. His book on possession and shamanism (1999) does not focus exclusively on the Gnawa, but instead draws on ethnographic examples from around the world. In contrast to that book and most of the work that preceded it, Hell's ethnography exclusively devoted to the Gnawa (2001) is not comparative at all—rather, he considers Gnawa culture and its place in Morocco and in the world. Abdelhafid Chlyeh, a professional psychoanalyst, had maintained an

interest in the Gnawa since the 1970s, but it was not until the 1970s that he began publishing and editing scholarly work on the subject. His books (Chlyeh 1998, 1999) are distinctive in that they include long, verbatim narratives from his consultants, which make them an invaluable resource, as I demonstrate below in Chapter 5.

Throughout this period from the 1970s to the 1990s, ethnomusicologists continued to maintain an interest in Gnawa music and culture. Philip Schuyler (1981) and Tony Langlois (1998) have described Gnawa music and the lila briefly. It was not until after 2000 that an ethnomusicologist devoted an entire project to studying Gnawa musical traditions. Tim Abdellah Fuson has presented on Gnawa music (2001), but so far he has not finished the doctoral dissertation for which he conducted long-term fieldwork among Gnawa musicians in Marrakech. After 2000, historians also became interested in the Gnawa, in relation to a focus on the submerged histories of sub-Saharans in North Africa. Chouki El Hamel, who has written on this topic, published an article devoted to the Gnawa in 2008 in which he presents valuable evidence from primary sources concerning the Gnawa of Morocco.

After 2000, Deborah Kapchan, a folklorist and anthropologist who had been working with the Gnawa for many years, began producing a body of work that culminated in her hybrid ethnography (2007), of which the first half examines the cutlure of possession (embodied trance performance) and the second half examines the possession of culture (transnational musical performance). Her work is transnational,

following Gnawa around Europe and North Africa, and it is also ethnographically grounded with close attention to language.

Three other writers bear mention after 2000: Ted Swedenburg, Pierre Alain Claisse, and Zineb Majdouli. Swedenburg has written broadly on Middle Eastern and Muslim popular culture, and the unpublished manuscript I cite bears the markings of his unique approach to transnational popular culture, maintaining balanced conneections to Marxist critiques of globalization and liberal enthusiasm over cultural diversity. The work of Claisse (2003) and Majdouli (2007) came too late to my attention to enable a clear evaluation of their work, but a cursory examination shows great promise.

COLONIAL ENTANGLEMENTS IN ETHNOGRAPHIES

Anthropological scholarship on the Gnawa can be seen as having followed broader trends in the ethnography of West Africa, a project that began early in the twentieth century as a part of the European colonial project. For example, Leiris (1981) and Clifford (1988:55-92) describe the research forays and projects of anthropologist Maurice Griaule in the 1930s. The later work of Griaule (1965), which explores Dogon cosmology, and the cinematic and scholarly work of Jean Rouch (2003), both throw light on interior West African beliefs during the period of the 1940s through the 1970s. Further, ethnographies by Paul Stoller (1987, 1989) chart the development of Songhay (Niger) beliefs and practices concerning witchcraft and spirit possession, respectively, through the 1980s.

Although France "won the right" to colonize much of West Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, control over the interior of its West African colonies was not established until early in the twentieth century. French ethnographers followed soldiers and missionaries into interior French West Africa early in the twentieth century with the Dakar-Djibouti Expedition of 1931-33, during which time Marcel Griaule and Michel Leiris crossed the continent from west to east with a huge retinue. Griaule's assistant Leiris (1981) recorded the story of the trip in his diary (originally published in 1933), which relates by turns "the boring, the passionate, the interesting, the unexpected, the banal" (Clifford 1988:168). The book was scandalized French society when it was published, since it told of Griaule's military-style ethnography, complete with stealthy theft of artifacts and beatings for uncooperative workers. Griaule published *Conversations with Ogotemmeli* (1965) in 1948, and perhaps by this point Griaule had softened his approach. The book relates his effort to relay Dogon cosmology as presented by the Dogon scholar Ogotemmeli, unmediated by the voice of the anthropologist. This approach signaled a tremendous shift from such ethnographers of Africa as E.E. Evans-Pritchard (1972 [1937], 1969 [1940]) and Meyer Fortes (1969 [1959]), in whose work the authorial voice is dominant. In Conversations Griaule refers to himself in the third person and never by name. Griaule does not speak Dogon and works through a translator, so the stories are actually mediated several times. Nevertheless, Conversations represents an approach that purports to let the subjects of

ethnography speak for themselves. Further, by objectifying himself in the text as "the white man" or "the European," Griaule acknowledges his own presence.

Such a reflexive approach is evident in the work of Paul Stoller (1989), which shares other aspects with that of Griaule (1965). Stoller's primary informant, Adamu Jenitongo, is also an elder and sage. Stoller relates the possession spirits of the various movements, spirits that belong to separate groupings within the Songhay pantheon. He includes the Hauka and the Sasale, which are significant for their timeliness: The Hauka, which first appeared in the 1940s, are the spirits of the colonial encounter, jesters who enact a "horrific comedy" (Stoller 1989:147) of soldiers and governors at the expense of their mediums and those around them. The Sasale, having arrived after Nigerien independence, enact a sexuality and immorality that provokes opposition from both the government and the reformist Muslim leaders of Niger. Thus Stoller ties the arrival and existence of spirit possession not only to essential mystical beliefs, but also to historical social forces. Stoller's predecessor in this project is Jean Rouch (2003), an ethnographer and ethnographic filmmaker who documented Dogon and Songhay rituals and everyday life for over 40 years. Rouch's famous and controversial film *Les Maitres Fous* (1959) documented the Hauka spirits in Accra in 1954 on the eve of independence, mocking the "mad masters" of colonial rule. The film was criticized by Africans for its alleged sensationalizing of African religious practices perceived to be embarrassing to emerging national identities; it was banned by colonial governments for the ridicule and high parody performed by the subjects on the colonial officers

themselves. This trend toward a critique of colonialism and Western domination of Africa, begun in the 1950s by younger anthropologists like Rouch, came to characterize most anthropological projects by the end of the twentieth century.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the European study of modern Moroccan society can be traced to Westermarck's monumental two-volume work (1968), first published in 1926, which reflects fieldwork conducted between 1898 and 1926. It is exhaustive on the topics of beliefs and ritual practices, reflecting the interests of European folklorists of the time in ritual, magic, and other remnants of primitive man. In the 1960s, American symbolic and interpretive anthropologists (e.g., Geertz 1968; Rabinow 1975) began to work in Morocco and provided continuity in their focus on interpreting key national symbols.

In contrast to this American school, Ernest Gellner (1969) provides detailed study of the political role of members in Berber tribes in Moroccan society. He focuses on mode of production as the primary means of determining a group's social role, and he poses a "static frontier," a line dividing sedentary farmers from mountain herders, as a central site where the interaction takes place that forms the role of tribally organized pastoral nomads within the larger society. Along the northern slope of the Central High Atlas in the 1950s and 1960s, Berber-speaking pastoralists herd their sheep back and forth from the mountains to the plains, while Arabic-speaking farmers cultivate farms in many of the same areas. An unstable peace is maintained between the competing groups by a third class of people, the *igurramen*. These groups, recruited from holy and saintly

lineages, occupy a mediating position and act as judges and legal advisers to those in the surrounding communities. Gellner is primarily interested in the political question of whether the system of government formed by this "saintly state" can legitimately be called a state. He finds a solution by synthesizing the political evidence with evidence from social organization, namely the "tribal" or segmentary organization of both secular and sacred groups. The groups contrast, though, in their political structure: The lay groups are egalitarian and symmetrical, while the sacred groups are hierarchical and asymmetrical.

In a later work, Gellner (1981) provides the larger arguments of political philosophy within which his earlier work is positioned. The main essay in that volume, "Flux and reflux in the faith of men" (Gellner 1981:1-85), attempts to reconcile the political aspects of Islam in North Africa—namely the theories of Ibn Khaldun—with those of David Hume, in the process attempting to correct Max Weber's account of the role of religion in civic society. Ibn Khaldun theorized that political dynasties rose and fell cyclically. In the cycle, external groups ("tribes") that valued strict and ascetic lifestyles came to dominate a bloated, lazy capital in North Africa and thus its failing empire. As they became acclimated to city life, these leaders became less suited for leadership positions, since the city's luxuries and bureaucratic efficiencies separated them from the necessary conditions of leadership—regular military action, harsh climate, marginal lifestyle. After several generations, the descendants of the original leaders were themeselves in need of being replaced. Gellner sees a parallel here to

Hume's "oscillation" thesis, which held that human beings oscillate between rational theism and irrational polytheism, and they do so for irrational reasons. Gellner contrasts the positivist sociology of Ibn Khaldun and Hume, skeptical toward any alleged progress in the human condition, to Weber, who had greater faith in social progress. Instead of Weber's puritan monotheists providing an increasingly rationalized society, Hume could also see the reverse, and in some cases saw the polytheism of Rome (in both its ancient and, in his words, "popish," varieties) to be preferable, particularly for its tolerant attitude toward individual liberty. Gellner's goal in this project is "to fuse Ibn Khaldun's political sociology with David Hume's oscillation theory of religion" (1981:35).

How does his ethnographic project contribute to achieving this goal? Since Islam is far better suited than Christianity to reconciling the contradictions of modern capitalist society (1981:6-7), Gellner seeks to determine what specifically it is in Islam that leads to such success. In a very real sense, Gellner generalizes from the conditions that he observed in the 1950s and 1960s in the Central High Atlas, which he extends back in time at least to the eighteenth century and perhaps, even necessarily, all the way to the fourteenth century. He generalizes such a situation to typify "Muslim society," at least as it is expressed in arid regions. This situation forms the concrete basis for Gellner's thesis concerning the "stable frontier" (Gellner 1969), in which the area under government administration—*bilad al-makhzen* or "lands of government"—exists in a tense relationship with regions in rebellion, the *bilad al-siba,* the lands of "organized

dissidence" under the control of segmentary "tribal" structures. Mediating between these two forces are the members of the saintly lineages, who as living saints perform a kind of "tribal polytheism" at the same time that they, as literate and authoritative judges, represent strict monotheism of the variety sanctioned by urban authority.

It seems to me that Gellner's theory of this stable frontier is directly opposed to other perspectives on the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, especially contemporary ones and later ones. As represented to Stefania Pandolfo (1997) by some of her consultants who had lived under the conditions of *siba*, the early twentieth century was remembered it as a fearful time when there were few protections for people who lacked powerful allies. In such perspectives, the lack of effective government is an aberrant time of extreme and unnatural lawlessness and violence. Ennaji (1999) cites the nineteenth-century historian Ahmad Khalid al-Nasiri (1834-1897), who claimed that "the nineteenth century was the most immoral of times" (Ennaji 1999:77). And Gellner himself notes that Jews, Blacks, heterodox believers and others (Gellner 1969:14) outside of the landowning segmentary structure were little better than non-entities: "The poor and weak are not merely excluded informally from political decision, but are even formally excluded from important aspects of legal life" (Gellner 1969:28). At the same time, Gellner's theory appears to make such crisis the norm, and to make the relative stability of the rule of law, and a state that seeks to alleviate conditions of desperation, the aberrant situation. Gellner also seems to hold a position that valorizes so-called "tribal" society, in which there is no hierarchical government, but rather self-rule by

landholders through the political avenues afforded by the free competition between segmented kin groups and lineages, mediated by the saintly lineages in a kind of minimal government. When we combine these two emphases—crisis and decentralization—an ideal type of Moroccan society (and thus, in Gellner's conception, "Muslim society") emerges that resembles a pseudo-state that is proto-capitalist, or even ideally libertarian-capitalist.

After the symbolic approaches of the 1960s, American ethnography of Morocco also became known for the "life-history" ethnography, which has the explicit intent of illustrating social processes through the model of the "social biography" (Eickelman 1985:14) that Eickelman, Waterbury (1972), and Crapanzano (1980) follow. A third type of ethnography that developed in Morocco between the 1960s and the 1980s is the memoir. Fernea (1965) had already established her mastery of the ethnographic memoir; her work on Morocco (Fernea 1976) and Rabinow's (1977) further developed this genre, including even greater reflexivity and candor.

Meanwhile, social anthropology continued its historical interest in political economy. In the interests of highlighting how my ideas interact with concerns of the mainstream of social anthropology, I want to cast this argument within a larger one concerning a global moment of modernity such as that expressed by Kamran Ali (2002) concerning interventions of the modern state into the lives of its citizens. Ali outlines ways the Egyptian state has worked alongside international donor agencies to transform Egyptian citizens into modern subjects, "self-disciplining and disciplined individuals"

(10). Ali points up the contradictory role the state plays in these transformations: While its stated goals use the language of individual freedom (rhetorically opposing "traditional" social ties), the practice of implementing this individualism leads to "freedom of choice [being] socialized as the state decides the parameters in which these choices may be made" (13). The means of the state to produce new subjectivities is thus presented as powerful but often contradictory. An example of this contrariness can be seen above at the turn of the eighteenth century, when Islam's injunction against enslavement of Muslims came up against Mulay Isma'il's need to form an independent military force and consolidate a source of authority separate from the traditional power structure. The result was a new subjectivity for many black Moroccans who had never been enslaved.

ETHNOCOSMOLOGY AND GNAWA ETHNOGRAPHY

Perhaps the heavy emphasis in Gnawa ethnography on religious beliefs and practices come about out of a particular sensitivity to cosmological expertise that Griaulian anthropologists tend to exhibit. In other words, rather than focusing on transitions in and out of the group—on marginal or liminal subjects, as students of Mary Douglas (1976) or Victor Turner (1967) might do—these anthropologists tended to study the leaders very closely and draw generalizations based on the observations of exceptional practitioners. Until recently French African ethnography appeared to be dominated by Marcel Griaule, who studied under Mauss and taught a generation of

French ethnographers (Clifford 1988). Griaule's best-known work, *Conversations with Ogotemmeli* (1965), relates Dogon cosmologies that have seemed difficult for other scholars of Dogon cosmology to criticize, even Dogon people themselves, since they necessarily represent the esoteric knowledge of a greatly learned scholar. Certain relationships to power are thus elaborated and enacted in this kind of anthropology (Clifford 1988; Hammoudi 1997), and the same relationships bolster the reputational force of both the scholar and anthropologist. More to the point, scholars cited in such ethnographies tend to hold strong beliefs and to interpret the incorporation into a Gnawa community as involving primarily religious-type conversion, one that involves strong social ties and that is accomplished through a mystical operation.

DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS

In the New World, the heritage of enslavement and the experience of racism led to the development among Black communites the condition of double-consciousness, a term first coined by W.E.B. Du Bois (1986). The contribution of Du Bois (1986) to questions of race and identity cannot be overstated, especially given that his explorations of the topic were part of a project developing a subject-oriented social research. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Du Bois has a premonition: The problem of the twentieth century (for America) is the problem of the color line. Perhaps because of the inherent frailty of prophecies, or because of Du Bois' own inner struggle to come to terms with his life-long interest in race and social theory, the correlate of that

pronouncement is not fully developed until nearly 40 years later, in *Dusk of Dawn* (1940). It is here that Du Bois reveals the idea that the problem of the color line is not a one-way problem of white society repressing non-white society and the reverse impulse against that repression, but rather it is a problem of identity and the formulation of the subject.

To elaborate this problem, Du Bois develops the idea of "double consciousness"—"an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (*Souls*, Du Bois 1986:364-365.) Then, in the reparkable "White World" section of *Dusk of Dawn* (Du Bois 1986:652-680), Du Bois creates a "mythical friend," ostensibly a composite of the white acquaintances Du Bois has debated for a lifetime. By naming this character Van Dieman, though, Du Bois suggests his continuing problematic relationship to his White (and Black) Dutch ancestry. If this friend can be considered an alter ego, then the conversation becomes an internal debate, a reflexive argument over self-identification, over the subjective experience of the researcher *himself*. This identity crisis reaches an anguished apex—"You are not black; you are no Negro" (665)—before Du Bois characteristically brings the example home to experience: "The Black man is the person who must ride 'Jim Crow' in Georgia" (666).

But because of this color bar, black experience is cut off from white America. Du Bois extends the Platonic cave analogy (*Dusk of Dawn*, Du Bois 1986:650-651) and adds a soundproof glass wall cutting off those imprisoned inside from interaction or any

other meaningful contact with those outside. A Foucauldian panopticon (Foucault 1977:195 ff.) that is a curious mix of dungeon and penitentiary, Du Bois' cave is dark and inhabitants "entombed" (Du Bois 1986:650), completely separate from white society; at the same time, however, the black prisoners are on display to the white world. Surveillance is maintained, albeit without the crucial backlighting necessary for a fully functioning panopticon to open the entire world of the prisoners to scrutiny. A result of this condition of separation, Du Bois argues, is the continued separation of black from white. Sympathetic whites can "assume a facile championship of the entombed" (650), but without the inside knowledge, Whites seldom do more than complicate matters (Baker 1998). Like Foucault's theory of the "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (Foucault 1980:81), Du Bois' model does allow for a positive solution: Liberation from the cave *as well as* "making articulate the submerged caste" (Du Bois 1986:651), a liberation that includes empowerment and speaking to power.[9]

Du Bois' conceptualization of race and identity depends very strongly on the idea that subjectivities are created through experience of bodily impositions. Enslavement and its attendant bodily practices are pointed up here, but also the new

[9] In an attempt to rescue Du Bois from generalized hagiography (a charge to which I am also susceptible), Adolph Reed Jr. (1997) cites Kwame Appiah's (1992:28-46) insight that Du Bois based his theory of "double-consciousness" on an already-suspect biological theory of race. Unlike Appiah, however, Reed refuses to accept that Du Bois historicized race in any way. Rather, Reed argues, Du Bois was "unambiguously in step with the conceptual orthodoxy defined by the Lamarckian social science of his day" (Reed 1997:121). Reed concludes that for Du Bois, double-consciousness signified neither a central principle of his thought nor a "distinctively black social-theoretical discourse"; instead, double-consciousness was historically contingent and generalized beyond black sensibilities (124-125). This expansion offers a second way out of the conundrum, since it simultaneously narrows double consciousness to its historical context—Du Bois' nineteenth-century bias toward the inheritance of acquired characteristics—and broadens it beyond the African-American experience.

Gnawa practices, which specifically provoke new kinds of diasporic identification. For example, images of Gnawa musicians are displayed around the world on posters and CD jackets, and in music videos. These stereotyped Gnawa images contrast sharply with the images on display in Abdellah's Dar Gnawa (Kapchan 2002a). In the display, posed portraits of Gnawa musicians in costume are hung next to images of great jazz musicians, photographs that Abdellah received as gifts when he toured the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York. In the "home" (in the lesser diaspora) of Dar Gnawa, images serve an instrumental function of legitimating the traditional ties between North America and North Africa. The function differs from the use of images abroad, in the greater diaspora, where they index something quite different. The use of Gnawa images diverges from that of images of Sikh martyrs; instead of stressing temporality and corporeality, Gnawa advertising images tend to stress an atemporal, two-dimensional image that is devoid of both sounds and smells, the very sensory elements that, along with color and movement, form the quintessence of Gnawa performance (Kapchan 2002b).

Gnawa are members of the Northern African diaspora in both senses of the word: they are North Africans, and they came through the northern slave trading routes across the Sahara, rather than the western Middle Passage across the Atlantic. El Hamel (2002) discusses the conspicuous absence of any acknowledgement among Moroccans of the slave trade, which lasted until the end of the nineteenth century (Wright 2002). This distortion in the representation is a shortcoming that this project (along with

numerous forebears) attempts to redress. At the same time that this heritage of enslavement is reinforced, however, there remains a contradiction similar to that noted by Gordon and Anderson (1999) with regard to diasporic identification in Nicaragua. The authors mention Gordon's early perplexity at discovering members of a black community who did not trace their ancestry to Africa but rather to the Caribbean and to England. The authors acknowledge the difficulty of distinguishing an academic "truth" of origins from the lived experiences of people, many of whom claim no identification with the African diaspora. A similar situation obtains as well in Morocco, where numerous darker skinned Moroccans are entirely comfortable with their origins in Morocco or southern Morocco, as autochthonous and indigenous Moroccans, while at the same time Gnawa and other Moroccans—both darker-skinned and lighter-skinned—are claiming an identity that draws on a well-established historical legacy of violence and oppression as well as continued marginalization. Determining the bounds of this distinction is a key point of interest and a goal of this project; nevertheless, one method that Gnawa use to draw adherents to accept their formulations of identity relies on Gnawa musicians' masterful manipulation of ambiguities and ambivalences.

El Hamel proposes that while Gnawa share much with African-Americans, one element of the Black diaspora that is missing from Morocco is any sense of a double consciousness:

> Unlike the African American double consciousness that Du Bois describes, black Moroccans perceive themselves first and foremost as Muslim Moroccans,

> and only secondarily as participants in a different tradition and/or as belonging to a specific ethnic or linguistic, real or imaginary, origin. Similar to the manner in which Berbers see themselves and identify with the collective consciousness of Arabo-Islamic historical experience, Moroccan blacks have found a way to reconcile themselves with, and to integrate themselves into, a Moroccan collective identity. (El Hamel 2008:258)

I concur that Gnawa are integrated into Moroccan society in a way that differs radically from African-American integration into American society. The "one-drop" rule and resulting segregation in US society challenges recent parallels, even for apartheid South Africa, where a variety of other racial categories existed, apart the white/non-white line in US society. Nevertheless, I am not so quick to dismiss the possibility that Moroccan racialization could in some way be understood as a variation of a global system of White supremacy. How else could be explained Moulay Isma'il's willingness to enslave Muslim Moroccans who happened to be Black? Berbers were not targeted in the same way. And I have witnessed, if not as radical a separation as some African-American Black Nationalists, at least some articulation among Black Moroccans of a consciousness of their unique heritage and reduced status in Morocco. Moreover, the example of the Berbers is an excellent foil—why do Black Moroccans, unlike Berber Moroccans, continue to feel such exclusion? Moreover, I cannot discount the theory that capitalist modernity is based not on the rejection of slave labor but rather on the practice of enslavement itself, which in practice has involved Black people disproportionately.

One scholar who has engaged with double consciousness in ways that are most pertinent for this project, Paul Gilroy, has, within the tradition of the Birmingham School of cultural studies, presented just such a theory. *The Black Atlantic* interweaves American, Caribbean, and European elements of Black culture in "an explicitly transnational and intercultural" approach (Gilroy 1994:15) and in this sense can be seen as similar to Hebdige's (1979) analysis of 1950s and 1960s white London street styles as responses to and reactions against the styles of African and Caribbean immigrant population. Gilroy explicitly critiques the encapsulated, airtight African-American tradition in this "polemic … against the ethnic absolutism that currently dominates black political culture" (Gilroy 1994:5). In this sense Gilroy's project is a response to the nation-state's intervention in black US cultural discourses. Gilroy also ties African-American thinkers and writers more broadly to European nationalism, most prominently Du Bois to Germany (Chapter 4) and Richard Wright to France (Chapter 5). Du Bois lived and studied in Germany, and in his writing he demonstrates explicitly "the relationship of modern black political theory to European romantic nationalism in general and German nationalism in particular" (Gilroy 1994:112). Du Bois was heavily influenced by Hegelian and neo-Hegelian political philosophy (134-135), which also play a role in Gilroy's conclusions.[10] The influence of nationalism can be seen in the expressive culture of the "Black Atlantic," and the theoretical underpinnings of this modern capitalist nation-state rest securely on Hegel's "master-slave" dialectic.

[10] Gilroy draws less clearly the ties between Richard Wright and France, choosing to focus on Wright's fascination with Nietzsche (160) and his influence on Simone de Beauvoir (186).

Gilroy's emphasis on double consciousness continues to isolate the Black transatlantic experience, but after the middle passage there is no attempt to connect this experience back to sub-Saharan Africa, much less North Africa. Nor is much attention in the book paid to religious subjectivities, such that the beliefs and practices surrounding spirit possession that pervade African as well as American religious patterns (Vodou, Candomble, Orisha, Santeria, Pentecostalism, etc.) and any effect these might have on double consciousness are not even considered. For sure, Gilroy's argument might have benefitted from closer attention to Black Atlantic cultural production south of the Strait of Gibraltar and east of Brazil.

CONCLUSION: RACE AND POPULAR CULTURE IN MOROCCO

What is the role of race in popular culture and the public imaginary in Morocco? To answer this question completely would demand reference to Jurgen Habermas and his analysis of the public sphere (Habermas 1991). In Habermas' formulation, this public sphere developed in Europe alongside the modern nation-state and marks the transition from social forms derived from the influence of nobles within feudal states over the control of land and the regulation of mercantile trade to social forms derived from the influence of bourgeois elements within modern states over the control of industrial production and trade in commodities. It feels too ambitious for this project to propose to compare European political and economic developments in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to Moroccan events in the twentieth. Moreover, doing so

would seem to imply that we could import as well all sorts of conclusions concerning instrumental rationality in the development of a "civil society" within the modern democratic (and European) nation-state.

Nevertheless, I feel that it is still possible to speak about an emergent public imaginary in Morocco. I feel more comfortable doing so along the lines of Dipesh Chakrabarty in his chapter on *adda* (Chakrabarty 2000: 180-213). "Adda," which implies a space of youthful sociality in Bengal—something like a "club" or a "salon"—means more than the "transition from feudalism to capitalism" (188). Instead, Chakrabarty argues, it carries and contains a "history of modernity," charting the emergence of the Bengali middle class and its public life (194). Instead of congruence between civil society and adda, Chakrabarty sees antagonism:

> They are mutually antithetical organizations of time and place. Civil society, in its ideal construction, builds into the very idea of human activity the telos of a result, a product and a purpose, and structures its use of time and place on that developmentalist and utilitarian logic (even which that logic is not simply linear). Conversations in an *adda*, on the other hand, are by definition opposed to the idea of achieving any definite outcome. Enjoying an *adda* is to enjoy a sense of time and space that is not subject to the gravitational pull of any explicit purpose. The introduction of a purpose that could make the conversation "instrumental" to the achievement of some object other than the social life of an

adda itself, kills, it is claimed, the very spirit and the principle of *adda.*"

(Chakrabarty 2000: 204)

A proposed public imaginary in Morocco would most likely need to be similarly established. Recent scholars of Moroccan publics (Ossman 1994, Kapchan 1996, McMurray 2001) have been involved in this project, mirroring efforts in other parts of the Arab world and North Africa, for example Armbrust (1996) and Ali (2002). Such approaches tend to draw on Bourdieu's concept of habitus, "systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (1977:72; emphasis in original). Bourdieu situates the habitus directly between the two opposing poles of structure and agency. The transformation and transposition of structure are vital to this relationship, especially in the case of class habitus, which is the consciousness of class solidarity accompanied by the disposition to act (Bourdieu 1977:83). Within this framework, Bourdieu (1984) turns to the patterns of consumption of aesthetic products by a broad range of people, arguing against the typically Marxist belief that a class is defined by its production. Rather, Bourdieu says, "a class is defined as much by its *being-perceived* and by its *being*, by its consumption—which need not be conspicuous to be symbolic—as much as by its position in the relations of production" (Bourdieu 1984:483). Bourdieu convincingly demonstrates, through numerous charts and graphs derived from surveys, that "taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier" (1984:6). Much of the value of Bourdieu's analysis is lies in his elaboration of numerous classes and social roles related to

occupation, education, social prestige, etc. To organize these roles Bourdieu introduces the concept of "cultural capital"—cultural knowledge—which can be inherited (through the education of one's parents) or acquired oneself through education (1984:80) and is deployed by an agent.

Cultural capital works within specific kinds of social conditions, as does "social" and "symbolic" capital, and Bourdieu terms these areas "fields," such as the field of cultural production, the "set of social conditions of the production, circulation, and consumption of symbolic goods" (Bourdieu 1993:9). Bourdieu finds the primary hierarchical structure in the opposition between "high" and "low" culture, but he understands these functionally. "High" culture is a sub-field of "restricted" production, "production for other producers" and "art for art's sake"; "low" or popular culture is a sub-field of "large-scale" production for the mass audience. In many ways, the shift in Gnawa practice could be linked to a shift of this type. It is apt to recognize that in the past 15 years, Gnawa music has become known to large-scale audiences. These audiences have fetishized it—treated it "as an object with magical and transformative powers"—on the way to its "becoming a form of symbolic capital" (Kapchan 2004b). The images we inherit from our upbringing and experience form the social imaginary (Taylor 1999:168) that we envision and attempt to restructure. The element of a social imaginary that impinges on our proposed existence as political and economic subjects in imagined communities (Anderson 1983) forms the public imaginary. In the following

section, I examine more closely some of the key aspects of these theories as well as specific features of the Moroccan public imaginary.

SECTION II: ENCULTURATION IN MODERNITY

INTRODUCTION

How do Moroccans think of themselves as subjects who are capable of determining their own identities? More specifically, how can metaphors of transposition and conversion help elucidate transnational flows of music and culture? In the following section, I begin with a discussion of modernism and modernity before examining more closely the processes of enculturation into a Gnawa identity. The monetary metaphor of conversion is appropriate because of recent Gnawa trends toward commoditization of their cultural heritage. Moreover, the musical metaphor of transposition is apt because of the musical context—religious identities can be seen to have been transposed, changed but still recognizable.

ARTICULATION AND MEDIATION

The following discussion of articulation relies on the incisive critiques of structures of power and hegemony developed by Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams from the theories of Gramsci and Althusser. I am interested in the complex, structured linkage between asymmetrical elements, including not only the correspondence between economic base and ideological superstructures (if we can still use such words) but also the ways these structures are maintained and challenged through such rubrics as nationalism, postcolonialism, and modernity. Below, I trace the development of

twentieth-century cultural Marxism and illustrate the application its critical apparatus in examples drawn from Veit Erlmann's (1999) analysis of the participation of South African musicians in the global capitalist economy.

From the 1930s to the 1960s the great concern was to debunk overly simplistic models that implied that the relationship between base and superstructure was one of determination or expression, and Georg Lukacs was followed by Theodor Adorno and other Frankfurt School theorists in championing the mediation thesis and its attendant concern with avoiding reification. By the 1970s, however, British Marxists such as Raymond Williams became concerned with the overly Hegelian impulses of such thinkers as Adorno to posit concrete and discrete categories of reality, which Williams considers a methodological fiction (1977:99).

Rather, Williams suggests, we need to look at mediation as the symbolic, signifying, or cultural aspect of social process—language and signification—which are "indissoluble elements of the material social process itself" (1977:99). If we do this, the distinction between the social and the material fails. By considering the process of social production and reproduction, rather than society itself, Williams draws attention to his call for analysis of the dynamic, interrelated elements of societies in flux. This formulation draws heavily on the view of Antonio Gramsci that the state must be viewed as a "continuous process of formation and superceding of unstable equilibria … between the interests of the fundamental group and those of the subordinate groups" (Bennett 1981:199). Stuart Hall (1980) extends this argument to include a discussion of

political economy proper—the various racialized structures governing Caribbean and Latin American economies—even as he retains the more general application to social formation (Hall 1980:325ff.). Hall introduces as well the concept of "articulation" in a similarly doubly applied sense: Articulation, already with a double meaning (both "giving voice to" and "joining"), refers in this case to the site of a complex, structured linkage between asymmetrical elements. Articulation for Hall can refer both to the linkage of a disempowered economy into the global system (Hall 1980:323-324), as well as to the correspondence between economic structures and ideological superstructures (329ff.)

The work of Erlmann (1999) can be understood within Hall's (1986) interpretation of a Gramscian methodology that emphasizes historical specificity and the dialectical relationship between national characteristics (which we can interpret as "the local") and regional unevenness ("the global") (Hall 1986:23). Further, this kind of analysis follows the Gramscian model by giving centrality to the cultural factor in social development: "the actual, grounded terrain of practices, representations, languages, and customs of any specific historical society" (Hall 1986:26). In this sense, Erlmann (1999) argues that colonial and postcolonial projects have resulted in an articulation between Africa and the West that he calls the "global imagination"—interests, languages, styles, images, and other "means by which people shift the contexts of their knowledge and endow phenomena with significance beyond their immediate realm of experience" (Erlmann 1999:4). In South Africa the arts, in particular, became a focal point of

"colonial engagements with and contestations of nationalism" (Erlmann 1999:117). Examining the nostalgic musical style of *isicathamiya*, an *a cappella* style sung by the all-male vocal group Ladysmith Black Mombazo, Erlmann finds it to have been "born of the encounter between these two worlds--the world of rural homesteads … on the one hand and the realm of factories and urban popular culture on the other" (210) There is a paradox in the fact that, although the lyrics of the songs call for the return of migrant laborers to their homes in primordial Africa, that same search for home "draws them ever more inexorably into the West and modern world" (200). Thus the cultural expression of isicathamiya is diasporic and transnational. At the same time, Erlmann stresses the role of state-owned media under apartheid to develop "folk" (or in their terms, "tribal") musics to emphasize divisions among the black population and contain access to power within the white power structure (207). In much the same way, state endorsement and promotion of Gnawa music—no matter how diasporic and transnational it may be—maintains some measure of control over it by governmental interests.

In South Africa, the state was always present in some sense, as it is for Gnawa musicians, whose identities are largely professionalized by their government-issued cards identifying them as folkloric performers. In South Africa, the production and circulation of expressive culture under apartheid was accomplished with significant influence from the state. This consideration of the racialized (and racist) nation-state raises questions of race, identity, and modernity in the postcolony. Within Gnawa

cosmology, Hell identifies ‘Aisha Qandisha with the spirit of modernization. In the final five sections of his book, Hell takes on the changes that have occurred in the Gnawa ritual over the past 15 years. He characterized these changes as processes through which Gnawa ritual has been folklorized, desacralized, commercialized, dumbed down, and finally overturned and spilled out. The identification of ‘Aisha with the spirit of modernity enables us to use a local cultural symbol to examine the immanent movement networks (Melucci 1985), built under the conditions of what might be identified as “local globalization” (Swedenburg 2000), that are enabled by ‘Aisha’s current ascendance within Gnawa circles.

Chapter 3: Modernism and Black Modernity

The terms through which Moroccans engage in capitalist modernity are under debate. This debate in turn relies in part on definitions of modernity. Dilip Gaonkar (1999) likes to think of "alternative modernities": the emphasis here is on an emergent understanding of modernity as "a leap in the open air of the present as … history" (Gaonkar 1999:7, ellipsis in original). Gaonkar points to the contradictory nature of the two visions of European modernity. Weberian societal/cultural modernity draws on Enlightenment theories of social and material progress, but it fragments cultural meaning and results in a world of "deadening and meaningless routine" (8). In contrast, the Baudelairian cultural/aesthetic modernity, which "seeks to redeem modern culture by aestheticizing it" (8), focuses on the "cultural patina of modernity as a spectacle of speed, novelty, and effervescence" (8), but the absence of moral constraint offers potential for "narcissistic self-absorption and hedonism" (9). Arriving at a theory of alternative modernities demands that one "provincialize Europe" (Goankar 1999:14; see also Chakrabarty 2000) and understand the "cultural" nature of these theories, that modernity is itself a culture and largely bound to the European experience (Gaonkar 1999:15). The contemporary situation of the Gnawa in Morocco shares features with each vision: on the one hand, Moroccans face an increasingly bifurcated society in which those with access to a quality education and social capital necessary to secure a job have found tremendous improvements in their standards of living. Meanwhile,

workers outside of these favored classes find it increasingly impossible to provide for their families. At the same time, since the 1990s, the Moroccan cultural landscape has undergone a transformation that has seen the sacralization of music festivals and the secularization of religious spheres. Within the context of such changes in the Moroccan social, cultural, and religious landscape, an analysis of the position of Gnawa in Morocco can describe textures and reveal details regarding passages along the often-contradictory paths and routes of these changes that everyday identities are undergoing.

SINGULAR AND ALTERNATIVE MODERNITIES

Timothy Mitchell (2000) takes issue with the "alternative modernity" thesis for two reasons: First, Mitchell argues that in creating an "almost infinite" number of permutations, the thesis undermines the methodological means by which modernity theorists can apprehend the specific powers of "replication and expansion" that imperial modernity imposes. Second, the language of "alternatives" already begs the question, "Alternative to what?" and in doing so implies an "underlying and singular modernity" (Mitchell 2000:xii). Instead of following down this path, Mitchell argues, it is important to retain the singular focus of modernity for its illumination of the real effects of imperialism. As a result, Mitchell focuses on representation, the "forms of social practice that set up in the social architecture of the world what seems an absolute distinction between image (or meaning, or plan, or structure) and reality, and thus a distinctive apprehension of the real" (Mitchell 2000:xiii).

The debate between alternative modernities versus a singular modernity can thus be characterized by a concern for the disabling effects of Eurocentrism, on the one side, versus a recognition of the dangers associated with underestimating the continued power of empire on the other. Shannon's (2001) argument for the specific nature of Syrian aesthetic notions of modernity comes down on the side of alternative modernities, since his subject—Syria's economy as well as its rich heritage of aesthetic independence—is somewhat insular. He focuses on the concept of authenticity ("asala") as a modern discourse on what is considered to be "valuable and good" in Syrian culture. No doubt this approach is warranted in the case of Syria. However, I'm not convinced that it applies equally to Morocco, whose experience of national development never went through the same anti-colonial steps as did Syria's—republican government, socialist-oriented economy, near-absolute rupture with Western European models, etc. The question remains to be seen whether Moroccan aesthetic forms enjoy similar liberty. As a result, I argue that the debate to a large extent can be settled by close consideration of the subject at hand, as well as through the researcher's biases when considering questions of power and desire. I myself feel torn between these two "alternatives": On the one hand, I hesitate to underestimate the continued influence of Euro-American imperialist hegemony in Moroccan aesthetics, particularly since Moroccan society is so closely intertwined with European languages, educational structures, and economic forms, not only historically and in formal political economy but also through the continued experience of international labor migration (McMurray

2001). My own experience in Ghana during the 1970s and 1980s, when Black revolutionary leftist anti-imperialism still held sway in that country, bias me toward a continued preoccupation with liberation by any means necessary. At the same time, though, it seems clear to me that Moroccan nationalist and pan-Arab anti-colonial tendencies within Moroccan society keep questions of influence and authenticity at the fore. Further, as an American anthropologist, my fundamental bias toward interpreting cultural patterns on the basis of their own particular historical trends of unique cultural logics leads me not to dismiss too quickly the thesis of alternative modernities.

Since Morocco's articulation into global capitalism is long and well established (see Chapter 1; Cornell 1990), it makes sense to follow Mitchell. Nevertheless, Mitchell's conception of modernity as "singular" seems insufficient to describe Moroccan experiences of capitalism. Moreover, the modernity that derives from Gnawa cosmology and lived experience are central to some European formulations of the modern. Below, I unpack some trajectories of Blackness, Morocco, and Gnawa culture in the transition from "high modernism"—a trend exemplified by the works produced during the early twentieth century up to the 1940s—and "late modernism," a much less confident and progressive period that is too often forgotten and folded into the capitalist triumphalism of postmodernity after around 1970.

I have slipped easily between modernity and modernism, from the "Weberian" side of Gaonkar's duality to the Baudelarian side. Science or technology is not necessarily the most useful designation and determinant of "the modern"—instead, we

might also look to modernity as a structure of feeling (Williams 1977). The accepted usage might be to employ "modernity" when describing capitalist oppression and rationalism of society, and "modernism" when discussing twentieth-century art. But I wonder whether questioning this distinction might be useful as well. It seems to me too easy for postcolonial political theorists to split the two, as Partha Chatterjee has documented in *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (1993), into a concrete problematic level of material modernity ("modern" technology or economics) and an esoteric thematic level of social modernity ("modern" ethics, human rights, gender equality). But ideologies are embedded in technologies, so to speak. Most particularly, embedded within the modern technology are the ideologies of capital, which is something not merely to have and invest but also to think with (Levi-Strauss 1963; see also Erlmann 1999, Jameson 1990). When human bodies engage with objects, these objects exert a form of control over the bodies, retraining them subtly and not-so-subtly too (Kapchan 2007). Moreover, Chatterjee himself notes subaltern scholars calling for the study of postcolonial engagement with modernity on thematic levels (1993).

If we can accept that Black culture is central to modernism (Gates 1985, Gilroy 1993), the question then becomes one of control. Who had control over this deployment of Black culture? For what ends? Was it under the "modernism" banner or the "anti-modernism" one? And how does this struggle over representation and appropriation play out in Morocco?

THE BLACK ATLANTIC: TANGIER

Tangier is wholly on the Atlantic Ocean. Although the coastline faces north within Tangier's city limits, the Mediterranean Sea does not actually begin until farther to the east. One thing about Tangier that became evident upon my first visit in 2001 was the presence of sub-Saharan Africans there. They tended to be recognizable apart from other Black Moroccans—they spoke English or Portuguese and not French, or else they practiced Christianity or some other non-Muslim religion. If these cues did not identify them, I tended to be able to tell from the clothes they wore, the way they walked and comported themselves—all the details marked them as neither North African nor European (and there were numerous Black North Africans and Europeans in Tangier). Most of the West Africans were economic refugees limited from gaining employment, even if they had entered the country legally, although very few of them had.

When I first met Abdellah in 2001 and 2002 and learned of his pan-African vision, I asked about the West Africans. Abdellah spoke English and was Black, and the West Africans had recently congregated not far from his home in the madina, in the old Socco Chico of the Beat novels, where Abdellah met his friends every day to play Parcheesi. Had he met any? His face grew thoughtful and a little sad. Yes, he had tried to get to know some of them. "But they are hard, too hard," he added. "Always..." and he made two fists and mimed boxing or pushing back and forth. At the time, I resolved that, when I returned to Morocco, I would try to understand what he meant.

When I returned to Tangier in 2006, I met a few West Africans, but I didn't pursue any relationships at first. Then one day in the Internet cafe a tall man, past forty, came up to me as I was leaving and began telling me a sad story in English. He was from Anglophone West Africa and he needed just a little bit of money to buy food and a shirt. I gave him what I had and arranged to meet him later—I was intending to trade money for time, to get his whole story. I knew that, since he was in the country illegally, professional ethics prevented me from using him as a consultant in this project, but I wanted to learn his story in order to corroborate the experiences of racism faced by others, as documented in published sources or reported in stories, that I would be using.

Over the course of a couple of weeks I had several meetings with the man. He always agreed to talk about his home and what drove him out, but he never did. Somehow our conversations always came back to his latest plan for making it to Europe, when inevitably led to his request for more money, far bigger amounts than I had promised. He always claimed to be a victim, a simple man from the countryside who needed to provide for his family back home, exploited by the big city and the various crooks who had swindled him.

I recognized his lack of "street knowledge" and awareness: One day, when I was riding on a city bus with him, we were standing near the exit door. At a stop, a young woman wearing a veil who was standing before the door stumbled as she stepped down. Based on my experiences in Lebanon and elsewhere, I knew that, as an unrelated adult

male, it could be seen as offensive to make any physical contact with a veiled woman. But my friend, who was talking to me the whole time, reached out his hand and held her shoulder very briefly to steady her. I could perceive immediate reactions from the other passengers, especially the men. After our stop, I asked my friend if he had realized what he had just done and whether he knew that he should avoid physical contact with veiled women. He was surprised, and he said he would keep an eye out in the future.

But despite his naivete, I eventually came to understand that I was a mark in his eyes, a source of more money. After several days of trying to ask him about his experience and getting only grander schemes for future actions, I could see I was getting nowhere. He was dominating my time and calling me at all hours to meet and discuss these schemes. As a result, I allowed a situation to develop in which he lied, and then embarrassed me publicly. I reacted with more anger than I could have and left him to find another mark. In this interchange, we were both attempting to use each other, but I had also had a dream of making an honest friend in the process. His marginal status, however, never allowed that possibility for him. He just wanted to use me and others in Morocco and move on to Europe, a miscalculation on his part, from my perspective, since I knew that I would have continued to help him had he treated me more kindly. Moreover, I was envisioning a kind of "New African Diaspora" in Morocco whereby West Africans could continue to find a place there. Of course, this man knew such a situation was impossible, since West Africans shared with Moroccans of any race a larger and broader position in the transnational division of labor—a flexible, external

pool of potentially underpaid and exploited unskilled labor in Europe, a goal that was still preferable to being unemployed in North Africa *or* in West Africa. Like many Moroccans, this man was just trying to escape to Europe. My encounter with the man led to my understanding much more clearly what Abdellah had meant when he described them as "hard, too hard." No amount of proposed unity—a shared position within racial categories (with Abdellah and other Black Moroccans), a shared spoken language and familiarity with similar regions (with myself), common interests, even honest care and concern for a friend's welfare—none of these could overcome the overriding social division between an undocumented migrant laborer and legal residents.

ANTIMODERNISM IN TANGIER

If the refusal to "buy into" the modernist project involves a rejection as well of the burden of establishing truth claims objectively, certain aspects of Gnawa practice that observed could be interpreted as doing just that. The refusal to establish objective means of evaluating truth claims that I observed chiefly concerned Abdellah El Gourd's refusal to rule on the truth claims of others—scholars, interested fans—concerning Ganwa practice in other parts of Morocco. This was particularly the case for reports made by m'allims and others from various Gnawa traditions, and European and American scholars, the main interlocutors I presented to Abdellah in our conversations. When I proposed alternate meanings for rituals or practices that diverged from his own,

Abdellah had the same response: He had his own knowledge, and they had theirs. In fact, such contradictions form a great dilemma for Gnawa scholars. Many of them want to be able to say they understand what Gnawa "really" believe, but there are so many contradictory stories that they end up being able only to report what they learned from these people here or those people there. Abdellah concurred with this dilemma—he always insisted that he couldn't speak for statements outside of their context. He had to know who said it and where before he could say anything. Once I brought the words of another scholar to him, published information that used untranslated words by an old m'allim. It had been requested that I ask Abdellah to explain what the words meant. But Abdellah refused to weigh in without knowing specifics: Who was the m'allim who had spoken these words? Which city did he come from? Who was asking the question, what question had he been asked, and what was the situation that had brought about the encounter? Of course, I had no information about these details. As a result, Abdellah couldn't evaluate or interpret what the words meant. For him, Gnawa knowledge was almost entirely context-dependent, with the construction of a context producing the focal point itself (Goodwin and Duranti 1993).

In the dispute between Dilip Gaonkar and Timothy Mitchell, what they don't acknowledge is that they are both right, within each scholar's constructed context of his argument. Of course there must be a European, capitalist rationalistic modernity in order for there to be either opposition or alternatives to it. European capitalism is logically and historically prior to capitalism elsewhere, and Mitchell is right to point to

predatory capitalism as determinant of these other modernities, supported by the Euro-American concentration of capital. But what perhaps Mitchell resists is the premise that, although there has always been opposition to the Enlightenment, on its own terms in the Vico-Nietzsche tradition, this opposition was enlivened greatly by the late-modern/anti-modern impulse. That impulse was itself generated out of the colonial experience and drew from the claims of people of the global south that they were modern individuals. These nationalists in turn co-constructed, alongside artists and writers of the mid-twentieth century, a certain and influential vision of the failure of the Enlightenment project.

Neither Gaonkar nor Mitchell goes so far as to deny the continued force of modernity, neither going as far as Armbrust in his assault on modernism. But I question how much Egyptians really reject modernism and how much they are merely disappointed in the failure of the Egyptian state to deliver on its promises of modernity. In his influential 1983 essay "The Decline of Modernism," Peter Burger traces the development of what later came to be called postmodernism back to the development of the avant-garde in the 1920s. He presents a strong argument against the anti-modern thesis: namely that if it were anti-modernism, it would more clearly find a way out from the subtler (non-Weberian) arguments of Adorno concerning the rationality of the artist (Burger 1992:39-41).

Burger's noted aporia regarding the challenge facing artists—to conform to a standard, conventional non-conformism—raises anew the question of form vs. function.

I have found Jan Mukarovsky to provide the most hopeful reconciliation of these two. Mukarovsky's intervention is not really a reconciliation but rather a Kantian bracketing of other questions to arrive at the useful notion of the "aesthetic function" of art, whereby we can perceive aesthetic functions inherent in all sorts of things (Mukarovsky 1978). Taken in whole, Michael Berube tells us, "Mukarvsky's work manages to authorize a complex sociohistorical analysis of how disparate social collectives have constructed and understood the features of cultural practices we commonly—and still usefully, I insist, with a full awareness of the paradox entailed in the invocation of utility—call 'aesthetic'" (Berube 2005:15). In this case, the pertinent question becomes, what is the function of art under late capitalism in Morocco? And how does a Gnawa version of this Kantian "bracketing" contribute to reconciliation of anti-modern impatience at the limited access to modern life for the urban and rural masses, with their continued dream of "the good life" that modernity promises?

MODERNISM AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

How did Tangier come to be connected to the Black Atlantic and thus to Late Modernism? It happened through the African diaspora. A place of (de)privilege in modernity has been strongly asserted for the Black Diaspora (Gilroy 1993). A shared history of enslavement ties Gnawa musicians to globalized popular music, since four musical genres based on or derived from black culture—rock-n-roll, R&B, reggae, and hip-hop—achieved global exposure in the last half of the twentieth century. Roots of

these styles, as well as the less wildly popular jazz and blues, have been found in the history of the Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993). Nevertheless, enslavement and Islam are barely connected in popular conceptions of each within the New World. Although Africans and African-Americans have been exploring such connections for over a century, these connections have only recently begun to receive serious scholarly attention.

Many of the slaves taken to the Americas between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries were Muslims. Nevertheless, more recent expressions of Islam in the New World hearken back to the early twentieth century. In a chapter on jazz bandleader Art Blakey's troubled identification with Africa, Ingrid Monson (2000b) points out that a significant influence on Blakey's early attitudes toward Africa stem from his conversion to the Ahmadiyya movement, a heterodox expression of Islam, in the 1940s.[11] According to Monson, the Ahmadiyya movement had a greater presence in New York in the 1940s than did the Nation of Islam (2000b:335). This history has been largely obscured in the subsequent pre-eminence of the NOI among African-Americans in the 1960s and 1970s. Whether they are recognized as Ahmadiyya, NOI, or allied with one of the offshoots of the NOI, like the Nation of Gods and Earths (Swedenburg 1996), expressions of Islam in the US African diaspora have tended to be circumscribed and cast as heterodox by an unknowing public, both Muslim and non-Muslim.

[11] The Ahmadiyya movement was founded in India in the 1880s by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), who claimed to the mahdi or messiah. After initial successes, anti-Ahmadiyya rioting took place in Pakistan in the 1950s, and the sect was declared non-Muslim in 1974 (Schimmel 1992). Nevertheless, Ahmadiyya members continued to find great success in education, social welfare, and active evangelism, finding converts in South Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

As a result, a space opens for me to recast the African diaspora as it has moved (through a function of social imagination) and been moved (by the actions of scholars and activists) north from West Africa. I choose to focus on one small part of the trend, that of Gnawa identities and subjectivities. One of these trends in diapora studies, Islam, has been the victim of benign neglect until recently in the academy. Since numerous ties between Gnawa musicians and other musicians in the African diaspora are mediated through shared Muslim faith, however, it is vitally important that these histories be clarified and elaborated. The history of the African diaspora is taut with asymmetrical strands, pulled ultimately by the forces of imperialism: Europe and the West are ever-present in these arenas.

The "African diaspora" has typically referred to formerly enslaved Africans of Europe and the New World in an attempt to theorize black identification across the Western Hemisphere, a black identity that is neither completely African, European, American, Caribbean, North American, nor South American, but rather all of them at once (Gilroy 1993:205 ff.). The OED limits the term diaspora to the Jewish dispersion after the exile of the first century CE and, mimetically, the dispersal of the Christians across the Roman world. Similarly, blacks influenced by biblical stories have extended the prophetic return of exiles to their own predicament. In her introduction, however, Monson (2000a) recognizes that toward the end of the last century the African diaspora became the paradigmatic case of diaspora.

Clifford's (1994) discussion of *diaspora* allies the term to *exile* and not *borderlands*, although he concedes that the distinction is blurred. Looking to Gloria Anzaldua (1987), we find a theorization of borderlands that illustrates very well this fuzziness. Anzaldua's image of an *Aztlan* homeland is precisely the kind of diasporic homeland that we find in Morocco: Without leaving Aztlan (greater Mexico), Mexican-Americans have been symbolically (and, often, physically) expelled from the northern (US) part of their homeland through racial, social, and economic exclusion. In a very similar way, black Moroccans—particularly as Haratin and Gnawa—have been deterritorialized without ever leaving home. Clifford notes this contradictory function: First, he establishes the essential difference dividing indigenous people "who have inhabited a territory since before recorded history" from those "who arrived by steamboat or airplane" (1994:309). He follows this statement with a discussion of "dispersed tribal peoples," like Cherokees in Oklahoma or New York City, we assume, who have been dispossessed of their lands, noting that they share many features with diasporic peoples. Clifford confirms, nevertheless, that "tribal cultures are not diasporas; their sense of rootedness in the land is precisely what diasporic peoples have lost" (1994:310).

Yet this is very similar to the condition that characterizes the Gnawa, particularly because Gnawa origins are so divergent. One the one hand, Gnawa maintain histories of the "Middle Passage" across the Sahara, and we can conclude that among their ancestors are West Africans captured and sold into slavery in sub-Saharan West

Africa. At the same time, Gnawa find origins in Arabia or at least in Ethiopia and Sudan (through Bilal), and further we have evidence from antiquity that at one time the only residents populating the southern Mediterranean coastline were Berber, black, or both. Thus the Gnawa are both alien to Morocco (in the sense of having been coerced into immigration) and indigenous, while the Berbers are indigenous but not alien, and the Arab, Andalusian, and other Levantine and Mediterranean populations in Morocco—"immigrant," if you will—are neither alien nor indigenous. Due to these divergent and contrasting origins, I take it that the key defining event that has produced any current solidarity among black Moroccans is the action taken by Mulay Isma'il in 1699 to mark most Moroccan blacks as slaves and to impress them into the military.

The originary event that produces a common diasporic identity is relatively well established in diaspora theory. For two millennia, the Jewish diaspora recalled Titus's destruction of Jerusalem and the Herodian temple in 70 C.E. as the defining event of their history, the portentous event of expulsion. Thus the event that produces diasporic conditions (and the movement of bodies and minds that follows the event) takes precedence over any previous terms of common identity and coexistence. Brian Axel expresses the concept well: "Rather than conceiving of the homeland as something that creates the diaspora, it may be more productive to consider the diaspora as something that creates the homeland" (2002:426). The act of Mulay Isma'il brought together both enslaved sub-Saharan Africans and the indigenous Haratin (El Hamel 2002) in an enterprise that constructed a homeland. This homeland is not necessarily a real place in

West Africa, but also and more importantly can be considered the domain of specialized religious and musical practices that are legitimated by knowledge of the spirits, practices that in turn may draw on the experience of enslavement.

Theories of diaspora coming out of the work of Gilroy (1993) take the view that the African diaspora exists in a dynamic between the West African and American shores of the Atlantic, with mediation through Europe. The Black Atlantic draws directly on the slave trade that made possible large numbers of Africans living in America, as well as subsequent less-coercive crossings and movements. Gilroy's project is self-consciously in conflict with both essentialist and anti-essentialist perspectives. First, Gilroy opposes such essentialist perspectives as produced an idea of a unitary and cohesive African identity, based ultimately in scientific racism. Against this pole, Gilroy emphasizes the anti-essentialist arguments that stress the cultural construction of race, that race is not a mystical unity but rather a social category with a history. This conclusion is, in turn, insufficient for Gilroy when scholars and activists lose sight of any search for origins and deny or de-emphasize, in the free play of signifiers, any ongoing anti-black violence or oppression in a white-supremacist global system. As a corrective, Gilroy proposes an "anti-anti-essentialist" perspective that recognizes that although "race is a social construct, it is also a social fact whose effects are undeniably real" (Gordon and Anderson 1999).

Gnawa are members of the Northern African diaspora in both senses of the word: they are North Africans, and they came through the northern slave trading routes

across the Sahara, rather than the western Middle Passage across the Atlantic. El Hamel (2002) discusses the conspicuous absence of any acknowledgement among Moroccans of the slave trade, which lasted until the end of the nineteenth century (Wright 2002). This distortion in the representation is a shortcoming that this project (along with numerous forebears) attempts to redress. At the same time that this heritage of enslavement is reinforced, however, there remains a contradiction similar to that noted by Gordon and Anderson (1999) with regard to diasporic identification in Nicaragua. The authors mention Gordon's early perplexity at discovering members of a black community who did not trace their ancestry to Africa but rather to the Caribbean and to England. The authors acknowledge the difficulty of distinguishing an academic "truth" of origins from the lived experiences of people, many of whom claim no identification with the African diaspora. A similar situation obtains as well in Morocco, where numerous darker skinned Moroccans are entirely comfortable with their origins in Morocco or southern Morocco, as autochthonous and indigenous Moroccans, while at the same time Gnawa and other Moroccans—both darker-skinned and lighter-skinned—are claiming an identity that draws on a well-established historical legacy of violence and oppression as well as continued marginalization. Determining the bounds of this distinction is a key point of interest and a goal of this project; nevertheless, one method that Gnawa use to draw adherents to accept their formulations of identity relies on Gnawa musicians' masterful manipulation of mass media technologies.

Although Gilroy's analysis affords productive new avenues of investigation, his perspective contains a lacuna with regard to Islam and North Africa, and it gives short shrift to the history of West Africa prior to the fifteenth century, when social identities and relations drew on inland Saharan crossing, a history of civilization and cultural efflorescence, not only war and slave raiding. Much work has already been done on this project by historians and others (e.g., Hunwick 1992; Segal 2001), but anthropologists have not been at the forefront. A corrective intervention would take an accurate vision of West African history that includes North Africa and Islam and tie direct links between this history and contemporary cultural ideologies and practices, treating the Gnawa and other such North Africans as members of the African diaspora. A critical intervention such as this might, moreover, challenge Gilroy's model—perhaps the racial formation operant in Morocco differs qualitatively from racial formation in other parts of the world. Gilroy's dependence on Du Bois requires mention of his contribution to questions of race and identity, which cannot be overstated, especially given that his explorations of the topic were part of a project developing a subject-oriented social research project.

This chapter has outlined the various means by which Black cultural forms again and again serve to bolster the cultural capitals of privileged members of the Metropole. Even when the borrowing has taken place at more abstractly aesthetic levels, the basic model remains unchanged: Cultural exchange takes place when the instability of one's identity's produces what Veit Erlmann calls a "vortex of racial ambiguity" (Erlmann

2000:87) that all too often is exploited by capitalism to "plunder and counterfeit black culture" (95). Yet Erlmann remains hopeful that "a certain integration" is possible through Gilroy's "diasporic intimacy." Such integration is the broad goal of the second half of Kapchan's work on the Gnawa (Kapchan 2007) in which she finds much to celebrate in collaborations between African-American jazz musicians and Gnawa troupes. Moreover, the means by which Gnawa have come to express their enculturation into a Gnawa identity has implicated mass mediated technologies for more than a generation. It is the rich legacy of Blackness in Moroccan history, as well as a particular experience of building a Muslim society, that determined the current status of Gnawa culture and enabled the strong influence that it exerts on Moroccan society at present. The changes that occurred in order for this state of affairs to come about reveal concrete details about the path that modernity has taken in Morocco. In the following chapter, I use the term "conversion" as a metaphor to help elucidate transnational flows of music and culture, particularly in terms of generational descent and influence.

Chapter 4: Conversion and Mass Media

In this chapter I wish to tie religion to commerce and music within the context of a broader discussion of enculturation. If we discard Tylor's definition of "culture" (Trouillot 2003), how can we still use the term? One way is through a more old-fashioned return of culture to refer to, roughly, the arts, encompassing both fine arts and popular arts. If we define our concern as such, then what happens to enculturation? How is sociality implicated in aesthetics? One way is through subculture (Hebdige 1979), through the development of new means of identification through the production, circulation, and consumption of items, images, and sounds.

From the perspective of capitalism, I speculate in this chapter on resonances between "conversion" as a religious rite of passage and "conversion" as a monetary function, from one denomination to another. I argue that monetary conversion is not a simple exchange of one specie for another but rather a transaction that results in a kind of double transformation through commodity exchange (Karatani 2004). In fact, the conversion of currencies is very similar to other commodity exchanges. As the Moroccan economy edges from an industrial-based economy to an information-based one, the distinction between commodity and money becomes less clear, and sometimes the mystification of money obscures how everyday conversions have taken place. In many ways, however, the trend of money's role in capitalism can be seen as having come full-circle: Once human lives were the primary basis for determining the value of

money through the *wergild* or "blood money" payment for the taking of a human life (Simmel 1978).

Marx's labor theory of value argues in favor of a shift from the Asiatic mode of production to the capitalist mode. Instead of surplus value being simply a result of tributary economies (and any monetary surplus arriving in trade through price differences based on geographic distance), under industrial capitalism, human labor comes to reside in commodities and endow them with a value that exceeds or surpasses the value of wages paid. Scholars have been arguing for some time, however, that surplus value has undergone yet another change under the information economy, what Steven Shaviro calls the "network society" (2003). As the primary source of surplus value now tends to be not in the production of the physical item (e.g., a compact disc) but rather from a proprietary design or other "intellectual property" (the music or program imprinted on the disk), value comes to reside again in people themselves as they exploit their own identities. Alongside other features of the global economy, the development of such relations between musicians and their cultural production in Morocco made possible the "possession of culture" (Kapchan 2007) and its sale and appreciation. Such changes in Moroccan society, including the religious landscape, reveal a particular engagement with globalization, one that takes into account the heritage of enslavement among the Gnawa, the fact that slaves represent an original means by which human beings were considered property. Self-exploitation might still be exploitation, but it offers the warrant for potential self-enrichment, or at least control

over any surplus. I conclude the chapter by acknowledging that "conversion" does not completely capture the full texture of the shifts in religious subjectivity of those who identify with Gnawa. Nevertheless, I assert that it is an apt metaphor for transformations in subcultural identifications and expressions.

CINEMATIC CONVERSION

Deborah Kapchan (2007) relates the story of Fatna, a shuwafa possessed through media, perhaps by a mediated spirit. Fatna tells her story as a conventional narrative, using standard discourse markers (Kapchan 2007:84-105). She relates the first time she "fell" into a possession trance. A respectable married woman with children, she was washing the dishes during a party in her home. The television was playing in the background, and the next program happened to include a Gnawa performance. When she heard the music, she began to beat the rhythm with her feet:

> My feet were banging, banging, you know, I was about to bang into the wall, and they [her guests] all came running. They came running, and they found me trancing, trancing, trancing. Right here, right in the kitchen. I left the faucet running. I didn't sense myself [*ma sha'rtsh b-ras-i*]. I left the water faucet open and left that stuff and I kept trancing. That's the first time that I ever tranced. (Kapchan 2007:84-85)

After that experience, Fatna told Kapchan, visions of women came to her in dreams. She continues to narrate her lucid dreams during which women (the spirits) surrounded

her, cared for her, and ministered to her, encouraging her to come and begin her "work" as a seer, a shuwafa.

Fatna's first teachers were the spirits themselves. One woman spirit even brought Fatna a sacred bundle with the colored cloth she would need to conduct ceremonies. Kapchan asks whether this visit was a dream:

> Not a dream. I just do this with my eyes. At night. When I do this [*she blinks*]. I imagine, I see it right next to me. I'm not asleep. And when that stuff is over, I open my eyes. Like a film that's turning. Like a film that I see. And afterwards I do like this with my eyes, and it does away. (Kapchan 2007:86)

Kapchan notes Fatna's use of cinematic vocabulary to describe her experience, and her subsequent dependence on a *fqih*, a religious specialist in the Quran and the divination of spirits, who is in private life a television director. The director oversees an attempt to exorcise the spirits from Fatna, which will also release her tongue—Fatna is mute throughout the ordeal. The television-director-*cum*-fqih manages to speak to the spirits, and the result, when Fatna speaks, is so visually arresting that the director regrets not having been able to film it, an apparent point of pride for Fatna.

These early attempts to appeal the spirits ultimately failed, however, because they did not fulfill the needs of the spirits. Instead of an exorcism, Fatna needed an adorcism, someon who could appease the resident spirits rather than evict them. Ultimately, Fatna became a Gnawa shuwafa. The important cinematic quality of her possession is an element in other narratives of initiation. Both Abdelhai Diouri (1979)

and Abdelhafid Chlyeh (1998) recount the story of Abdeltif, a m'allim of Marrakech. In Diouri's recounting,

> In the 1950s in Marrakech a new cinema was to open. The m'allim Abdaltif had the following dream prior to its opening: He entered the cinema, which was full to bursting. On stage was a group of Gnawa. Among them he recognized his own brother, the same one who, according to the dreamer, had counseled him to spurn any contact with the Gnawa. At the height of the trance, all the people quietly withdrew, following the members of the band. Only the narrator's brother was left, along with the "plate" [*tbiqa*] loaded with different kinds of incense. A moment later, even his brother quit the scene, leaving the dreamer alone, face-to-face with the board, fascinated by the boxes of different colors of incense (Diouri 1979:198; my translation).

The 1950s marked the beginning of indigenous electronically mediated cultural products, the first Moroccan recordings coming in the 1940s (see Chapter 1). Cinemas had been showing films since the 1920s in Morocco, with Egyptian films appearing during World War II, but the production of Moroccan films was much slower to take place, even in the 1940s (Carter 1999:195ff.). Abdeltif was much in advance of other Gnawa who would make the leap to electronic media in the 1970s and after.

The story of Abdeltif's initiation is much more elaborated in Chlyeh's recounting than it is in Diouri's. Beginning on page 56, Chlyeh begins the verbatim retelling by Abdeltif of his story, which takes up more then 10 pages. After his father

died, he had gone to see the Gnawa, of whom his father's brother was a m'allim. After his mother died in 1945, Abdeltif and his brothers went out to find work. He found a job in a public oven, and at the same time he began to learn music of the Gnawa. His elder brother did not approve of his professional labor subsidizing his work with the spirits. At some point he changed masters, and he also owned a ginbri that he practiced on. He had ritual visits from spirits, visions, and struggled with his two m'allims, M'Barek, with whom he had begun apprenticeship, and Lahcen, the former teacher of M'Barek. Abdeltif transferred his allegiance from M'Barek to Lahcen. After both he and Lahcen had complementary visions to make a pilgrimage to the zawiyya (school and pilgrimage center) at Sidi Chamharouch, they made a pilgrimage. While at the zawiyya, Abdeltif woke one morning with the mark of a ginbri's neck, a long round pole, burned across his left palm, a kind of stigmata. After returning from this trip, Abdeltif worked at a lila directed by Lahcen that was held at the home of a person named Ba Ali. At one point during the lila, Lahcen passed the ginbri abruptly to Abdeltif. Abdeltif was unprepared, but he played his master's ginbri automatically. It was after all these events had taken place that the vision of the cinema took place:

> One day, well after my vision at Sidi Chamharouch, a town crier announced the opening of a cinema in the Kasbah district. I planned to visit this new theater to see a movie, but it had not yet been built. At that time, I had not yet formed my own troupe, but I already had the vision [at] Sidi Chamharouch with the ginbri traced [on my palm], and Maalem Lahcen had already ceded his ginbri publicly

(at Ba Ali's house). At that time, however, I had not begun to make commitments on my own behalf to conduct derdeba lilas.

One night, after the announcement that the cinema would open, I had a dream where I saw myself in this room as if I were there. On the screen, I saw a large number of Africans. There was no ginbri or any other instrument, but I heard songs with words in foreign languages. After a while, the film ended. I was about to leave when suddenly I saw people coming out of the screen. They headed towards me and encircled me. At the time I had been alone in the cinema—the spectators had all gone. These new people gathered around something in the aisle that led to the exit. I looked to see what was in the middle of their circle and saw a plate (*tbiqa*) that contained a brazier and incense boxes identical to those that are placed before the m'allim for the celebration of the derdeba lila. All these people disappeared and I found myself alone with this tbiqa. My dream ended with this vision. I can now interpret the vision as a premonition announcing my future rise to the status of m'allim, able to conduct the ritual celebrations on behalf of the brotherhood.

After that I formed my own group by hiring two men of my age, then I became partners with a sacrificer. At the beginning I sacrificed the animals myself, but I realized quickly that this was a lot of work for only one person. (Chlyeh 1998:65; my translation)

In this second telling of the dream, the men on screen are not identified as Gnawa at first, and Abdeltif's brother is not present among them. What I wish to draw attention to, however, is the sustained series of dreams, signs, visions, and other ordeals that need to be used as evidence in the initiate's case to justify his status as a m'allim. I also want to point up the evidence presented by Chlyeh that this conversion came long after Abdeltif had already publicly identified as a Gnawi, and even had already played his master's ginbri at a lila. By calling attention to these details, I hope to illustrate how conversion here is a long journey toward an ill-defined destination, filled with events of training and preparation, and sequences of signs and portents that need to be interpreted afterwards, before being concluded by a change in status. Moreover, the journey requires a tremendous investment of time and money. The choice to focus on such professionals is made consciously and deliberately by the researcher. In doing so, does the researcher implicate himself or herself?

The instability between truth and reality is derived from a consideration of the "self" of the ethnographer, a self with considerable freedom to create imaginary worlds but simultaneously bound to reality (Buck-Morss 1994:47). Particularly when filming possession ceremonies, Jean Rouch speaks of filming as a particular kind of trance, a *cine-transe*, in which he mimetically identifies with the subjects of his cinema and becomes a self that is simultaneously a non-self (Rouch 2003:98-99). Russell (1999) calls this operation the "doubleness of the possessed body" (198). In contrast, for example, Bertrand Hell does not consider his own positionality vis-à-vis the

trance/possession of ethnography. Rather, in maintaining that trance and possession are not commensurate, Hell rejects Lewis' argument that—although local interpretations of the trance-possession split must hold true—ultimately there is no qualitative distinction between the two: Possession merely "embraces a wider range of phenomena than trance" (Lewis 1971:40). Instead, Hell concurs with Rouget, who subsumes possession within a larger category of trance. While Rouget rejects the extreme position of Mircea Eliade and Luc de Heusch, who argue that possession and trance diverge completely divergent, he still argues in favor of a contrast between "shamanic trance," characterized by a voyage of the person across space and time, an out of body experience, and "possession trance," which is an "opposite … type of relationship with the invisible" (Rouget 1985:18). In possession, the alien spirit inhabits the person in trance, and the spirit is embodied. In shamanic trance, people "go to the spirits," but in possession trance, "the spirits have to come to them" (19).

These metaphors of travel are not just ethnographic conventions but are themselves conceptions motivated by mass media. The "self" of the ethnographer is no more singular than the "self" of the cinematic m'allim or shuwafa. Moreover, this metaphor of cinema that we use when describing ourselves derives thoroughly from cinema, a commercial, capitalist art.

CONVERSION VS. INITIATION

Mystical operations resulting in changes in status call to mind the question of why I persist in using the term conversion but not initiation. Although it is used in a more limited sense, for example by Hell (1999, 2002) to describe the incorporation of new members into a Gnawa *taifa*, the term is associated more broadly in anthropology with rites of passage. In Van Gennep's analysis of initiation (1960:65-115), which introduced the term to academic usage, the broader connection is made between initiation and puberty. For Van Gennep, a successful initiation results in a child becoming an adult and forthwith bearing the responsibilities and the liberties of adulthood. I'm concerned that I do not overly confuse the issue, since already there have been some intimations of "survivals" between West African social practices, including secret societies and hunting societies, and the Gnawa (Hell 2002, Paques 1991). These seem to me to differ structurally from the situation of the Gnawa—for example, while West African secret societies tend to be based on ethnicity and are exclusive, initiation into a Gnawa *taifa* is not based on ethnicity or race, and seems to be open to any interested, devoted person irrespective of social standing.

A more general and appropriate example might be found in the general initiation by Moroccan men into Islam, which involves circumcision and the recitation of the *shahada* or testimony of faith, but for reasons outlined above I hesitate to compare becoming a member of a Gnawa *taifa* to becoming a Muslim. Van Gennep faces no such restriction in using the term to describe initiation into the Issawa "fraternity"

(1960:96-98); however, he states that such minor initiations are equivalent not to entering a religious community of faith but to marriage. As I see it, the model here is quite different: Rather than a change in vertical status associated with a more typical rite of passage, as implied by Turner as well in his emphasis on lower status to higher status (1969:130), the change from being unaffiliated with a *tariqa* or *taifa* to being affilated with one is not an upward movement but a sideways one, a horizontal move more broadly within society. True, within the taifa there is verticality—a new initiate is considered "lower" than an advanced member. However, in this section I am not so interested in determining someone's level within a taifa as I am the simple presence of mutual identification, on a horizontal line. As a result, even within such a limited sense, "initiation" does not apply to my project because the people I am most interested in here are not necessarily those who have joined a Gnawa taifa. Rather, I am interested in much more ephemeral and loose shifts in identity

CENTS AND (RELIGIOUS) SENSIBILITIES

When I asked if non-Moroccans ever became Gnawa, one Spanish man who lived in Marrakech was mentioned in passing as a Gnawi. "He is a Gnawi," Abdellah told me. "He has some business in Marrakech, a shop, and he lives there in a house in the madina." One American I know, who does not identify as a Gnawi though he is a Muslim, studied for many years with a m'allim in Marrakech, working on a graduate degree. Another, who does identify as both a Gnawi and a Muslim, made frequent visits

to Morocco and associated with Gnawa in the United States. Hell himself, who is French, not only initiated into a local group in Marrakech but also became a sort of muqaddem, even as he continued to pursue an academic career in France. He never converted to Islam. He gained a "taba'" or stamp of authority from L'Ayachi, a m'allim in Marrakech, to conduct rituals and to heal people. Nevertheless, Hell does not consider this initiation to be a "conversion" (Hell, personal communication). Before him another French anthropologist, Viviana Paques, became a muqadma or shuwafa and eventually moved to the Marrakech area, where she was living in 2006. She was well known by reputation to the members of Dar Gnawa as the "French shuwafa" of Tamesloht, and Abdellah knew her personally and recognized the legitimacy of her status as a Gnawa shuwafa. One key element in their "conversions" was that each of these Western converts was able to disengage from Western lifestyles long enough to gain physical proximity to an active Gnawa community. The demands of Csordas' "portable practice" would not be able to sustain similar paths to initiation for more people who are unable to move to Morocco for several years and devote long hours to participating in all-night ceremonies.

I persist in using this term conversion if for no other reason than its resonance as a term also used to describe the conversion of currencies in financial trading. It calls to my mind capitalism, and it identifies transnational globalization, including not only the globalization *of* religion but also globalization *as* religion, as a function closely related to international capitalism and the international division of labor as underpinning the

capitalist world system. But Gnawa initiation is not understood by Moroccan Gnawa as a religious identity in any way comparable to their Muslim identity (El Hamel 2008). Thus a person can belong to a Gnawa group or leave it without affecting her or his status as a Muslim. In my admittedly limited understanding of Muslim theology, it appears to me that there is no true religion apart from Islam, which cannot be added to nor detracted from. From this perspective, Gnawa beliefs do not and cannot compare to Islam, which is a *din* or religion. As a result, any similarity between Gnawa conversion and orthodox religious conversion or reversion to Islam is just that, a formal similarity, with no necessary relationship implied at all. Nevertheless, it's important to note that many scholars have favored just this kind of conclusion. In this tale of heterodoxy, Muslim practices and areas of expertise traveled from West Africa to North Africa, where they found a home in closely knit communities that practiced ecstatic possession trance in all-night ceremonies. Anthropologists and others have placed great emphasis on the mastery of challenging intellectual and musical knowledge, in addition to the proof of divine or spiritual election to positions of leadership (Chlyeh 1998, Paques 1991, Lapassade 1982). In more recent conversions, newcomers are often sympathetic to learning more about Islam, and these heterodox African-Muslim beliefs and practices condition the accommodation. Even if newcomers don't convert outright to Islam, or if they don't need to, being already Muslim, a kind of conversion can often be observed (notwithstanding Hell's rejection of that term to describe his own status).

In "The Anthropology of Conversion" (2003), Diane Austin-Broos favors such a loosening in the terms used to describe religious conversion. Austin-Broos argues that conversion must be disentangled from not only the sense of "absolute breach" but also from the sense of "syncretism." She views conversion as a "form of passage, a 'turning from and to'" (Austin-Broos 2003:1), in the process envisioning conversion as constituting a journey toward a destination. Austin-Broos cites Marshall Sahlins as connecting modern society to the market and Clifford Geertz as in turn connecting the market to religion (3). After reviewing historical trends toward the growth of "world religions," Austin-Broos attributes this growth to the rise of modern nationalisms, both secular-democratic and ethnic-sectarian. But she notes a third historical trend as well: "Changes in the rendering of knowledge about the world, especially in the secular West" (7). Here, Austin-Broos focuses on the engagement with science, noting two means of engaging with science that are alternatives to secularism: Fundamentalism seeks authoritative truth, while the constrasting approach seeks a subjective truth. Others have called this second approach "postrationalist," a term Austin-Broos rejects in favor of "romantic" (7-8). The term, she argues, covers both neopagan and New Age movements, as well as other efforts to re-enchant everyday life with imagination, experience, and emotion. Austin-Broos suggests that "in milieus infused with the West's modernity," which she terms "transcultural modernity," a vacillation between these last two approaches characterizes most conversion experiences, in which converts negotiate a "quest for a habitus that embraces text but also accommodates their own

capacity for agency" (9). I argue that a version of such an approache might be (1) open and accessible to Moroccans, Muslims, and Gnawa, and (2) not incompatible with the continued status of such people as orthodox Muslims. The problematic in Morocco finds modern religious subjectivities presented with similar choices: "fundamentalism" (really, Salafi conservatism) and the "romantic" options offered by Sufism and its popular alternatives, including the paths of the Issawa, the Hamadsha, and the Gnawa, among others.

But as I mentioned above, substantive and reliable models of the routes to initiation into these groups are not all that common outside of the professional offices of muqadma, shuwafa, and m'allim, offices that are confirmed upon being reached, not before. Throughout Paques (1975, 1978, 1991), Diouiri (1979), Lapassade (1982, 1997, 1999), Hell (1999, 2002) and Kapchan (2007), we find regular attention to narratives of conversion by m'allims, muqaddimas, muqaddims, and shuwafas. The convert commonly has an interest in Gnawa music or is afflicted by a spirit. Often the person's parents oppose his or her continued attendance at lilas. Sometimes a struggle with the m'allim requires that the person transfer training and allegiance to another m'allim in the same city. Finally, there is usually some supernatural sign or vision that attests to the election of the convert, often involving mediating spirits. After a physical sign of this transformation is expressed—e.g., after the rising m'allim takes up his master's instrument and plays it, involuntarily, for the first time, the rising m'allim proclaims that the completion of his conversion path has been enacted. It is important to note that

several of these conversions involve cinema, the enactment of visual technologies of mass media.

THE MEANING OF GNAWA STYLE

In sharp contrast to a set of religious-like beliefs, Gnawa can also be seen as a subculture, particularly in Morocco. Over the past 20 years, Gnawa music has combined with sub-Saharan identification such that Gnawa has become the premier indigenous means by which young Moroccans can identify with Africa (Swedenburg ND). As young people come to learn Gnawa songs and play the instruments, they invest themselves in an identity that revolves around music and race. At the same time, they also often invest their money. True, world music industrial development (Taylor 1997; Frith 2000) has produced famous, world-class musicians of which few in the home country have ever heard: Jajouka in Morocco (Schuyler 2000) and Les Musiciens du Nil in Egypt (Zirbel 1999) are two examples of groups that have tremendous resonance in Europe and the United States but almost no currency at home. Despite the appearance of irrelevance, however, the impact of these groups is not nil. Even if members of the public are ignorant of these groups, local professional musicians and would-be professionals tend to be aware of and influenced by their examples, if not in terms of musical style then at least as a practical model model of development to follow. As a result, alongside nationalist folkloric impulses toward music development, the world

music industry has also influenced some local valuation of folk music and local attempts at commoditization (Callen 2006).

Particularly since the 1990s, Gnawa music has become globalized and has returned to Morocco for many reasons, some of them contradictory. By all means, government sponsorship for the festival accounts for some of the genre's explosive growth. At the same time, though, to account for high youth enthusiasm for the festival we might look to popular reaction against European exclusion on one hand, and governmental and Islamist browbeating on the other. On the governmental side, in 2003, 14 young heavy metal artists and fans were arrested at a concert in Casablanca and accused of Satanism. Three were sentenced to prison terms. (See Callen 2006 for a full discussion.) These fans listened to heavy metal, not Gnawa or reggae music, but the message resonates for Moroccan youth that participating in a musical subculture can be a politically charged act. The idea that a government might support some youth musical movements while simultaneously opposing others should not surprise those with a basic assumption of the diffusion of power within a single governing entity (Foucault 1977)—one governmental impulse seeks to exclude and denounce youth action, while another seeks to co-opt it and incorporate into state regimes of signification. In contrast, on the Islamist side, just prior to and during the Essaouira festival, I observed that conservative and religious newspapers regularly ran editorials that denounced it as a time of drunkenness and debauchery as well as a likely site for Israeli infiltration of Moroccan society and the Zionist seduction of the nation's youth. This unsupported

rumor may have had its beginning in the fact that Essaouira has a sizable and influential Jewish population whose most prominent member, Andre Azoulay, is special counselor to the king and a patron of the festival. Nevertheless, continued attendance at the festival and interest in Gnawa styles remained an act of positioning that could possibly have led toward identification with Africa and the African diaspora.

But whether through governmental patronage or through popular enthusiasm, Gnawa music has become one of the premier contributions of Morocco to global popular culture. As a result, identifying with Gnawa music, whether through purchasing recordings or going to concerts, has become a common thing for young Moroccans to do. As such, it is a subcultural style, a modern identity by which youth define themselves through the products they purchase. Newcomers are encouraged to spend their time and money learning more about Gnawa—purchasing CDs and instruments, learning the names, faces, and distinctive affectations of the best known m'allims, and using clothing items and accessories that identify the person as a Gnawi or Gnawiyya.

THREE CONVERSION NARRATIVES

Thus we have people like Liz, Ahmad, and Muhammad (names have been changed) and their respective conversion narratives, narratives that are nevertheless not conventional at all. Liz turned up in Tangier in 2006 after spending several weeks in the Sahara Desert and the Atlas Mountains. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, Liz had opened a small kiosk for massage therapy four years before, after about 10 years of working as a

massage therapist. The success of this kiosk led Liz to open a second kiosk, and Liz suddenly found herself a successful small-business owner in need of a vacation. In 2003 she had given a massage to Randy Weston, a jazz pianist who has played with Gnawa musicians for decades, prior to one of his concerts in Ann Arbor. During the massage she had asked him about Morocco. He urged her to go visit, and when she got to Tangier, he told her, she should go see Abdellah El Gourd at Dar Gnawa. By this point Liz had spent several weeks in the Sahara and the Atlas, working her way north. After spending a couple of days talking, drumming and playing at Dar Gnawa, Liz liked what she had heard. She asked about the music, and I recommended some artists whose albums were available in the United States. But she was still unsure how to proceed: "What can I do now? Are there any Gnawa back in Ann Arbor or in Michigan?" Abdellah replied, "You! You're in Michigan, and you're a Gnawiyya." I felt like I had just witnessed a benediction or a commissioning.

I must admit that it is a bit of a stretch to consider this a conventional conversion. Beyond purchasing some music and playing her ginbri, Liz did not choose to pursue Gnawa spirituality on her own in Michigan. In particular, she later told me, practicing the ginbri had caused her wrist pain. But the link between music and spirituality, altough a very fine one, can also be very strong. Her interest and commitment were genuine. But can a religious sociality based on such fleeting encounters really have an impact? Austin-Broos' conclusions on the future of conversion seem to confirm that it's possible, not only among more "traditional"

converts, but also among those of a more ephemeral nature. Speaking of the "romantic" converts, Austin-Broos argues that they "quest for a habitus that embraces texts but also accommodates their own capacity for agency. This perhaps is the mark of a transcultural modernity that now informs *most of the passages* involved in conversion" (Austin-Broos 2003:9, emphasis added). Articulating subjective experiences of this kind of transcultural modernity is one of my primary concerns here, where we can see Liz not only expressing interest in taking an active role not only in defining her spirituality, but also in embracing the very particular texts, discourses, and practices of Gnawa spirituality.

If Liz's conversion story is a bit unusual, Ahmad's story is more typical. The son of a famous Gnawa dancer who belongs to the troupe of a Gnawa m'allim in Rabat, Ahmad was one of the principal dancers in Abdellah's troupe. A fixture at Dar Gnawa jam sessions, Ahmad usually wore a mix of hip-hop and Italian-style clothing, and he shopped judiciously for rare CDs of Gnawa m'allims, a difficult task: Not only are most CDs pirated, but most Gnawa CDs also sustain a random and purely arbitrary relationship between the performer advertised on the cover and the music included on the disk. Purchasing a CD, then, became an enterprise in judgment and discovery. One had to sit in a sales kiosk and listen to CD after CD, seeking to identify a particular Gnawa m'allim purely on the basis of auditory clues of his voice, unique style, and conventional repertoire. During the Gnawa festival one of the younger members of the troupe came to the salon one day carrying a CD he had bought because it featured the

picture of rare m'allim. After listening to it on my laptop, though, Ahmad judged it to be another copy of one of the volumes of Hmida Boussou's lila recordings (the same recordings I had recommended to Liz), and the younger member was playfully chided for not scrutinizing the content more closely before he bought it.

Ahmad's interests extended, however, to other areas of consumption and identification. I had procured a souvenir bag at the festival, and upon my return to Tangier I used it to hold my notebook, pens, and articles and books. At the festival, Abdellah had received a "packet" that included the souvenir tote bag. He had given to me in private as a gift—none of the members of the troupe knew that he had given it to me, since he was concerned about fairness. In retrospect, I am even more honored, since the fact that they were they might have been jealous signifies to me that I was considered one of them. But at the time it seemed natural that Abdellah would be concerned, and I told the others that I had bought it—I had seen them on sale and knew what they cost. In Tangier I carried the GNAOUA bag on my shoulder, but I hesitated to hold it with the logo facing outward, since I thought that would identify me as a tourist and as a potential "mark" for the legion guides and hucksters of the madina. It didn't make any difference—they persisted in yelling at me and pursuing me the entire period of my stay. But my reticence offended Ahmad. He felt like I was hiding my identification with the Gnawa. He strongly urged me to wear the bag with the "GNAOUA" logo facing outward, an act that would identify me as a Gnawi along with the rest of them.

For Ahmad, identifying with the Gnawa involved, in part, purchasing and displaying goods. This was a bit mystifying to older Moroccans, but seemed to make perfect sense to those of a younger generation, like the young man I saw a few weeks later. He was sitting in Tangier's famous Cafe de Paris wearing a dark blue T-shirt with a Nike "swoop" symbol on the left side of his chest, up next to his shoulder. On the right was the "Berber Z" (Silverstein 2004)—a bold vertical line intersected at the top and bottom with inverted half-circles. The man was wearing his ethnic identity literally "on his sleeve." Simultaneously, he was equating this marker of Berber ethnicity with one of the most recognizable commercial logos on the planet. This extension of logos resulted in sectarian and ethnic identity becoming iconicized (Silverstein 2004). Meanwhile, the assertion that these identities constituted "intellectual property" (Shaviro 2003) established them as cultural elements that could be sold, purchased, and otherwise "possesed" (Kapchan 2007).

My third and final example is Muhammad, a young man from Paris. He looked like a typical Parisian of West African heritage—tall and slender, with dark skin and a shaved head—but his ancestry was not from Senegal or Mali; instead, Muhammad's father was from Wahran (Oran), Algeria, and his mother from Oujda, across the border in eastern Morocco. His first language was French. It is important that his father was Algerian-born under French rule, since this fact formed the basis of his claim to French nationality (Silverstein 2004). Muhammad spoke Arabic (although he was not literate in Arabic) in addition to English and Spanish. He was about 35. When his mother had died

about ten years before, he said, he had visited her home in Oujda and had learned from his grandmother that his grandfather had been a Gnawa m'allim. His interest piqued, he had attended a Paris concert that Abdellah had played in 1999 with jazz saxophonist Archie Shepp to learn more about Gnawa music. He had approached Abdellah after the concert and had talked with him, and they became friends. Afterwards, whenever Abdellah played Paris or Lyon, Muhammad would clear out his schedule as much as possible to spend time talking with him. In 2006 he had saved up to come to Tangier for a week, and he was spending every moment possible with Abdellah and the others at Dar Gnawa. Two years previously he had traveled to Cuba and Haiti, where he learned a lot about Haitian Vodou and Cuban Santeria, both of which share features with Gnawa. Muhammad enthusiastically shared with me his experiences in the Caribbean. He was also interested in the music of the Roma people ("gypsies"). One evening, Muhammad was facing his return to Paris. His time had been too short, and it was clear he didn't want to leave. Nevertheless, he had a wife and daughter back in Paris, and a really good job at one of the best bookstores in France, he told me.

That evening, Muhammad confided in me something Abdellah had told him that morning: "Gnawa is not a profession. Get a career, take care of your family, and do Gnawa on the side." In other words, Gnawa is a part-time activity that should not be confused with a profession. The second half of Kapchan's *Traveling Spirit Masters* (2007) is a response to the fact that the "Gnawa have become professionalized and are aware that their very identity is a commodity" (146). This is a necessary movement for

the Gnawa m'allims to make. It might not seem unlike that someone like a m'allim, who is already accustomed to playing for an audience and receiving payment for that performance, to become a professional musician. Nevertheless, it is even more likely that a professional musician who is well versed in Moroccan folk styles should be able to incorporate Gnawa songs and styles into his or her repertoire and perform as a Gnawa musician. Ever since the 1970s, when Gnawa songs first began to be played on stage, certain of them, particularly from the opening *fraja* suite, have become "standards," so to speak—"Youbadi" and "Sandiyya," for example, are two that I've heard in almost every Gnawa concert I've attended, and at the Essaouira Festival in 2006, I witnessed a crowd of thousands singing along to both those songs. They had entered the popular imagination. With such a widely known popular repertoire, how do Gnawa m'allims maintain social control over its performance? One thing keeping Gnawa m'allims from being swamped by a wave of professional musicians is by keeping a continued central postion for trance and specialized knowledge of the spirits within the performance—in other words, its local, particular significance. The vital importance of the m'allim to would-be converts is evident in Muhammad's costly apprenticeship to Abdellah. Muhammad was looking for more than a technical introduction to Gnawa style; instead, like Liz, Muhammad was seeking spiritual leading and training in the same particular texts, discourses, and practices of Gnawa spirituality.

Despite such quests, these very texts, discourses, and practices are in the process of themselves being transformed, as I demonstrate below. Moreover, such a milieu of

instant identities, ethnic logos, and summer-holiday initiations calls to my mind popular culture. In a sense, Gnawa is a Moroccan subculture seeking to become globalized, and it lives through practices of consumption and circulation. The transformation here comes when money is exchanged for commodity. This is a simple metamorphosis or shift, common enough in Moroccan cosmology as the shift from spirit to flesh, from blood to milk, or from night to day. My additional point here is to open the space further and consider not only transformation but also conversion.

A FOURTH CONVERSION

The fact of subcultural identification has been noted, but what of the process whereby a person comes to identify himself or herself with a group? I'm interested in this process because it sometimes involves a "leap to faith" (Kierkegaard 1980), a conscious re-orientation toward a group or identity. This topic is particularly interesting to me because, like many anthropologists, I often find myself defending the topic of my study to non-anthropologists in the academy and it other social circles. The first time I lived in Ghana not as the child of missionaries but rather as a graduate student in anthropology researching the Lebanese community in Accra, I can remember going to the University of Ghana to hunt up sources in one of the libraries.

I had been on the historic and beautiful Legon campus dozens of times with my parents or with friends, but this time I was identified solely as a foreign researcher. I struck up a conversation with another academic in the library. He asked what I was

doing there, but when I told him my topic, he laughed out loud. It was a not a friendly laugh. He wondered why I wasn't studying a more useful topic and a more appropriate community than a group that was, in his opinion and the opinion of many Ghanaians, at best a nuisance and a continued reminder of Ghana's neocolonial legacy (Nkrumah 1966) and at worst, alternatively, a parasitic capitalist caste or a corrupt population of powerful and greedy foreigners. In fact, even among my Ghanaian friends, the most charitable attitude I could elicit concerning the Lebanese was that they were "very cooperative among themselves"—in other words, insular and exploitive. In contrast to these stereotypes, I found the Lebanese in Ghana to be a rich and varied community filled with people who integrated in remarkable ways into Ghanaian society. However, this experience of meeting resistance to my research topic has continued to be repeated over the years, in the United States as in Ghana and Morocco, leading to elevated voices and impassioned defenses.

For example, in Tangier I sustained a months-long conversation with a friend who worked as a waiter at one of the cafes I frequented. During this time I tried to convince him that the Gnawa were anything more than low-class, second-rate hucksters. Through these experiences, I found that identifying publicly with the group I was studying was a bit of a trial by fire. The strength of my identification reinforced itself through each repeated defense of that identification. I began to be interested in the process by which people come to identify themselves with others, forging bonds of solidarity. This is particularly important for Moroccan youth, and even more so for

Gnawa youth who choose to identify with a group that faces opposition from various factions in Moroccan society whether on the basis of class, piety, or political commitment.

My own conversion to Gnawa identity included a conscious orientation to publicly identify myself *with* the Gnawa, but I did not go so far as to identify *as* a Gnawa, which seemed to me to imply a certain level of personal, emotional, even spiritual commitment that I lacked the will to reach. This did not spring from a lack of faith—I had no problem believing in the existence of God, the saints, and the spirits. Perhaps they never spoke to me, but I never doubted that they could have. Instead, I never had any heightened consciousness or feelings of fear or dread during any of the lilas I attended. My lack of a possessing spirit limited my potential for becoming a Gnawa in the religious sense. In the subcultural, commercial sense, though, I became a Gnawa through my consumption patterns.

My lack of a possession spirit was confirmed through my exposure to the full range of songs, rhythms, scents, and tastes associated with the *mluk*. I attended numerous tourist lilas during the Essaouira festival, and I attended the beginning of an "authentic" tourist lila in Marrakech in the days following the festival. In Fes in 2001, I attended a "daytime lila," a shortened possession ceremony that took place in the afternoon and early evening. In Tangier, I managed to attend only one of the three lilas held at Dar Gnawa while I was there (Abdellah El Gourd performed at several other lilas in the neighboring towns of Asila, Tetouan, and Chefchaouan during this time as

well). The lila I attended came late in my stay, just a few weeks before I was to leave. It was sandwiched in between two international trips that Abdellah had planned. It was just as I had come to expect—music, possession, ritual meals, blessings, prayers, conviviality—with three major unexpected features.

First, I did not expect that it would be so much fun. The other lilas I had attended had been with people I didn't know, or didn't know well. But this lila was being conducted by friends whom I had come to know well and admire greatly. My relationship with those conducting the lila lent a particular spirit of joy to the experience. The first night, Abdellah suggested that I sit in the small "smoking" room off the main space. The older men and senior adepts sat in an alcove behind the musicians, who faced the main floor, slightly elevated. The women sat in the private alcove opposite the men and the musicians. We young men were off to the side in a small room that connected to the main space through a narrow doorway. This room also had a window with a shutter between it and the entryway, a narrow hallway that, during the lila, was always filled with children from the street outside. I sat with the young men and smoked cigarettes incessantly (they smoked other substances incessantly). On occasion one of the musicians would cycle through during a lull in the ceremony for a smoke break. We watched and chatted and told stories, and occasionally one of the young men would go into trance and be helped to the dance space. It was an enjoyable social event.

Second, it was much more expensive than I had been led to expect. In the weeks leading up to the lila I had sat with Abdellah while he negotiated with the woman who was holding the lila. She haggled about the price. I had never seen Abdellah so meek and respectful around a woman—he tended to be reserved and a bit cold around them, and the woman was very insistent, loud, boisterous, and even pushy as she tried to get a better deal. Abdellah was adamant, though—he needed 5,000 dirhams up front (over $500) to divide among the musicians, in addition to the cost of the food, soft drinks, incense, and other expenses. I was also present when he distributed that money among the musicians—it is possible that he did not keep a portion for himself. In any case, all negotiations were transparent and open to anyone who happened to be present at Dar Gnawa that day. During the lila itself, I was expecting to pay 10 dirhams for each blessing—at the daytime ceremony in Fes, I had paid with a 5-dirham coin once—it was all I had left—and everyone had laughed good-naturedly at me. But I quickly realized that the expected donation at Dar Gnawa was 20 dirhams for each blessing.

Third and finally, the only heightened emotion I felt during the lila was anger. On the third and final night, I was still sitting in the smoking room. Abdellah had invited me to sit with the men (perhaps feeling that my experience needed variety), but I told him I was more comfortable sitting with the young men—there were chairs in the room, but in the alcove, the older men sat on cushions on the floor, and my back had been hurting, so I remained with the young men. One of these was a young man with Down syndrome. He was possessed by a spirit, and he danced eagerly when his suite

was being played. Most of the time, though, he suffered a lot of teasing. He was a bit young to be sitting with us—we were all in our twenties and thirties, and he appeared to be a teenager. But it was clear that he had been placed there to keep him out of trouble. Still, the kids out in the entryway were poking sticks and straws through cracks in the window's shutters, in front of which this young man was sitting. He kept reacting angrily and telling them to stop, but they ignored him. Finally, he opened the shutter and started hitting at their hands. They grabbed his arm and pulled it through the window and tried to close it on his arm. He was struggling and trying to keep from yelling, since the ceremony was going on in the next room. I watched all this with a growing sense that someone should do something. In retrospect, I should have suggested that he trade places with me. However, when one of the boys took out a lighter and started burning the young man's arm, I got angry. The young man with Down syndrome was writhing in pain and screaming, but the loud music was drowning him out and nobody could hear him in the pre-dawn dark. I leapt up, crossed the room, yanked his arm back in the window, and slammed the shutter on the hands of his tormentors, hissing at them to stop.

Needless to say, I got the attention of everyone in the little room, and even some of those in the main room saw what I did. Word got to Abdellah, who was playing at the time. When the song was over he came back into the room and asked me what had happened. When I told him, he looked very sad. "We almost made it through the whole lila without any problems," he said sadly. He seemed to be disappointed that I hadn't

handled it with more tact and subtlety. I felt bad too, and I apologized when I saw him that evening, but he just smiled and said I shouldn't worry: Sometimes, bad things happen.

My conversion began slowly. I did not realize how closely I identified with the Gnawa until Ahmad urged so strongly me to carry my bag with the logo facing outward. When he did so, I recognized that my actions were being watched, and that he thought I was ashamed of being identified with them. I could demonstrate my conversion with the display of a commodity.

SPIRITUAL COMMODITY

How does commoditization itself come to be naturalized within a Gnawa pop-cultural context? It does so in the resolution in tensions between Gnawa as religious initiation and Gnawa as global commodity. On the one hand, within the larger cultural movements of Nass al-Ghiwane and the Essaouira festival, Gnawa music has become largely divorced from the control of the m'allims. On the other hand, though, the m'allims and the initiatory tendency they represent continue to wield some power and authority. This continued influence is important because basic Gnawa values involve a kind of fundamental egalitarianism that is sometimes at odds with capitalism, and this egalitarianism continues to imbue subcultural Gnawa identifications with a leftist, anticapitalist structure of feeling (Williams 1977), even as the "business" end of the industry becomes quite firmly lodged in commoditized relations of exchange. I should

note that I am using *egalitarian* here in a political sense, not an economic sense, and in particularly emphasizing equality in the autonomy of each m'allim. As I understood it from Abdellah, Gnawa *ta'ifas* are not hierarchically organized among themselves, and each Gnawa m'allim is considered to be basically equal to every other. That was why he refused to judge another m'allim. When the payments for the festival were announced, Abdellah could recognize that some m'allims were more successful than others and thus more valuable to the festival, but he seemed to consider the money paid to each m'allim to attend should have reflected the equality in status to which each m'allim should have access. Below, I attempt first to demonstrate a vaguely egalitarian impulse within Gnawa subculture with an anecdote about the Essaouira festival. Second, I illustrate the consequences of the tension between initiatory and subcultural conversion in the example of Hassan Hakmoun, the only fully professional Gnawa musician.

Abdellah had not been invited to the Essaouira festival for several years. In the Spring of 2006, however, he told me that he had detected that the organizers were putting out feelers to gauge whether he would be able to come. I sat with him and observed as he received phone calls and visitors to see if he would be open to returning this year. He initially put them off and tried to negotiate, refusing to commit until he had better knowledge, even though (as he later discovered) the terms were already set. In this sense, the marketplace of the Essaouira festival was already "*prix fixe*," with no space for open-ended negotiation (Kapchan 1996). Gnawa troupes were brought in from across the country to open on the main stages, while the largest draws headlined. The

troupes that were chosen to play the main stages were those that had toured internationally, that knew how to command a crowd of 10,000 and keep to a tight schedule. Some Gnawa troupes, however, were invited only to play "lilas"—all-night, fully acoustic sets that showcased the ritual repertoires of their respective regional traditions. These stages were smaller and less prestigious, and the troupes playing them were paid less. But Abdellah was shocked to learn how much less they were being paid.

After the offers were made and the contracts signed, the m'allims started calling around to each other to report how much they were earning or had heard that others were earning. Abdellah had a terrible look on his face as he told me how much one small, little-known group from southern Morocco was making—only Dh7,000, or around US$600. Some troupes playing the main stages made up to Dh26,000, he said (over US$2,000). Dar Gnawa was to get Dh14,000, well over US$1,000. When I heard the news, I remarked that the amounts seemed pretty fair to me for a week's pay, given that the official Moroccan minimum wage was around Dh90/day, and the unofficial one for unskilled laborers was Dh20/day. Abdellah looked disapprovingly at me and stated that it wasn't much to divide equally between seven people. Seven was the limit that the festival would pay for in terms of transportation and per diem allowance. Dar Gnawa took eight, adding an outsider who had previously worked out an arrangement with the troupe but whose presence had to be covered out of their share. I had not considered that the total would be divided equally. I had thought that the troupe members would have a scale for remuneration, depending on age, experience, and commitment to the

troupe. I felt ashamed that I had assumed this. But Abdellah added more: Not only would the members would have little to show from their week in Essaouira, but those with jobs would also have to take unpaid leave from their jobs. The member with the best job, one of the troupe's leaders, worked as a custodian at the Tangier port. He worked long hours mopping and cleaning for little pay, but as a government job it was secure and had good benefits. He already took off extended time each summer touring with Abdellah, and he was concerned that he not ask his superiors for more time off. I relate these details not to discuss the festival organizers' strategies for responding to a variety of pressures from suppliers, performers, underwriters, and advertisers. Rather, I would like to draw attention to the alarmed reactions of the Gnawa to the social stratification and inequality inherent under capitalist value systems.

In a well-supported and sophisticated series of arguments, Bertrand Hell (2002) observes that the initiatory Gnawa identity, Gnawa of the *ta'ifa*, once depended on a gift economy that involved spiritual payments between humans and spirits. This economy has already disappeared. But until around 10 years ago, the primary Gnawa initiates (musicians and other spiritual professionals) played a limited mediating role in this economy, and they benefited from it to a greater or, much more usually, to a lesser extent. Many of the scholars writing about the Gnawa have commented on the reduced lifestyles of some of the greatest Gnawa m'allims—extremely modest homes, widespread illiteracy, and a general lack of prospects for the upward mobility of their family members (Hell 2002, Kapchan 2007, Swedenburg ND). Within this context,

Abdellah El Gourd of Dar Gnawa was an exception that proved the rule—a working-class technical education, literate in four languages, with his family occupying a single, historical structure. But the source of his stable income, namely a modest pension from the US government as a reward for twenty-six and one half years of labor, derived from non-Gnawa sources. Abdellah did not need to conduct all-night ceremonies for the money, although he conducted lilas as was fitting to his convenience and disposition, and he charged a typical rate befitting his high stature within the Gnawa community of Tangier. In contrast, as Hell has documented, those m'allims who seek to support themselves at a level beyond subsistence as professional spiritual workers have found themselves depending more and more on commoditized exchanges through the use of cash in non-symbolic transactions (Hell 2007). This process has come about in parallel with the rise of Gnawa subcultures.

As these cash exchanges have become more and more common, exclusively initiatory Gnawa identification has become increasingly rare. Bertrand Hell (2002) identifies the work of Aisha Qandisha, the camel-footed she-demon who is also a possessing spirit well known to Gnawa, with the transition from a gift economy to a monetary economy. Hell recognizes this transition in the monetization of the ceremony. As the full ceremony has become more and more expensive, a truncated version has become more common, which has resulted in the loss of entire families of spirits (Hell 2002). I discovered a second feature in Tangier—the rise of the "private lila." According to Abdellah, in 2006 some m'allims in Tangier were conducting lilas that

were limited only to a single guest list, such that the only ones present to share in the ritual meal and other blessing would be those who could be expected to pay money. Abdellah said he was not on good terms with these m'allims, since such a practice went against his understanding of the lila, which is required to begin in a public space with an invitation to all adepts within hearing to attend if they wish, no matter if they can pay or not. For example, the young man at Dar Gnawa had Down syndrome and clearly could not pay anything, yet he had a place there by virtue of his possession and his belonging to the *taifa*. Any sense of "pay to play" would have been roundly dismissed by members of the community. In addition to these innovations within the lila, the space of possession has also become desacralized in the transition from ceremonial space to concert hall. When I asked Abdellah about these shifts, he conceded that he could not recognize Gnawa practice today. "What we knew as Gnawa is over," he told me. In other words, the spirit of capitalism has overthrown the Gnawa ethic of spiritual "work."

This is not a sustainable capitalism, however. The commoditization of Gnawa culture has not resulted in social reproducibility. I confirmed the fact with numerous Gnawa practitioners and interested observers: There is only one fully professional Gnawa musician, and his name is Hassan Hakmoun. Hakmoun came to the United States as a teenager. His mother had been a shuwafa with ties to Gnawa communities, and he had learned to play ginbri as a child in Marrakech (Kapchan 2007). After moving to New York, Hakmoun developed a bourgeoning career as a professional

musician. He has had albums reviewed in the *New York Times* and *Rolling Stone*. He never initiated into a Gnawa ta'ifa, or if he did, his initiation did not result in his ability to defend himself effectively against Gnawa who challenge that he lacks *tagnawit*, "Gnawa-ness" or authenticity (Kapchan 2007). My point here is not to debate Hakmoun's authenticity. In fact, as Kapchan points out, any perceived lack of authenticity does not reduce his being celebrated as "cultural pop icon and a Gnawi" by Moroccan audiences (Kapchan 2007:139). He is well known among urban Moroccan youth. Instead, I wish to draw attention to his position apart from the m'allims and other initiatory professionals, and his simultaneous success in the pop market. This state of affairs would seem to argue against the conclusion that initiatory conversion has some relation with subcultural conversion. This is not necessarily the whole story, however.

I sat in Dar Gnawa with Abdellah and several young men from the troupe and some visitors. We had been discussing Hakmoun because, on the CD player at the time, was an album I had supplied on which a Moroccan-German ginbri player and Gnawa popular performer, someone not unlike Hassan Hakmoun, was collaborating with a Cuban musician and several others, including members of a pop-Gnawa group. A Caribbean singer and a US rapper were also featured, and each sang or rapped long verbal passages. Singing about Aisha Qandisha, however, the Gnawa performer merely repeated the line *Lalla Aisha jaya* ("Lady Aisha comes") numerous times, with no further lyric. Abdellah was disappointed: "Why isn't he singing more? He just repeats a single line." Abdellah considered this lyrical limitation to be a demonstration that

glaring deficiencies existed in the singer's knowledge of Gnawa culture was limited—"He doesn't have the knowledge." Knowledge here is *ma'arifa*, the specialized knowledge that a Gnawa initiate has about the spirits and their identities. This is no defense of orthodoxy—the m'allims are not policing knowledge by trying to maintain control over initiates from another *ta'ifa*. It is understood that each *ta'ifa* or town or region will have a specific corpus of knowledge concerning the names of the spirits, the songs played for each, the suite to which each belongs, the particular color, incense, and food associated with each, and the order in which each spirit would come in a typical ceremony. In other words, Abdellah is not disputing the content of the singer's knowledge. Rather, he is point out its perceived lack. Indeed, discussing or even debating Gnawa knowledge is not uncommon among initiates—I spent many hours listening while members of Dar Gnawa debated the meaning or the content of Gnawa knowledge with minimal input from the m'allim. Abdellah's presence manifested a light but necessary touch. Even at only Dh7,000 for a week's labor, m'allims and the initiatory converts in their *taifas* remained necessary ingredients in the musical slurry at Essaouira—their presence authorized the proceedings and rendered small but valuable nuggets of authenticity from the boiling sluice box of commercial pop culture.

Even as initiatory Gnawa identities were described as crumbling, popular Gnawa identities are ascendant. Such successes can be attributed to the efforts of the group's leaders to make Gnawa identities more accessible, particularly through the consumption of commodities. This consumption comes through the production of

electronically mediated popular culture, which in turn derives from the development of a cultural economy based on information and the valuation of cultural heritage. Transformations in Gnawa identities have mirrored transformations in Moroccan society more generally, and in some cases even anticipated them. As a result, changes in Moroccan society, including changes in the religious landscape, reveal a particular engagement with globalization, particularly the trade in cultural identities. Attempts to control or determine the means by which newcomers can "convert" to a new identity reveal tensions within the contradictory paths that modernity has taken in Morocco within this racialized subculture. In the following chapter, I turn to the specifically musical basis for interaction between Gnawa practitioners and their would-be interlocutors, which relies on a process of transposition.

Chapter 5: Transposition in Performance

> "The speaking follows the music—it is the complement of the sentence. Musicians know the music. They must create a space before they jump into it. If the musicians respect one another, they will prepare one another to enter the space." Abdellah El Gourd, 2006

This chapter examines the process of transformation from the perspective of the aesthetics of musical performance. I examine how the process of transforming one's foundational outlook can be seen as a kind of "transposition" (Csordas 2007). Upon encountering new modes, scales, timing sequences, etc., and deciding to participate, musicians tend to jump into the frame and begin the "work" of transforming their previous knowledge to meet the demands of the new performance context. In the same way, young people who have come to learn about Gnawa beliefs and practices through their attraction to the music often decide to participate in the life of the larger community. Gnawa social contexts are similarly participatory, and newcomers are invited to sit and chat with established members. As a result of this openness, newcomers are encouraged to bring their prior experiences to the table and make their own unique contributions. The resulting harmonies differ from what had previously obtained, even though intervals and contrasts are usually maintained.

The history of Blackness in Morocco should lead observers to expect that Gnawa would play a mediatory role between powerful competing forces. In order for the globalization of a religious form to occur successfully, its beliefs and practices must be made transposable. Gnawa play a central role in enabling transformations in the religious and music economy of Morocco necessary to achieve such transposability. Below, I suggest some of these transformations. I conclude that the musical metaphor of transposition is an apt description of how newcomers arrive at a new Gnawa sensibility. This is particularly the case for people who come from social backgrounds that are atypical for Gnawa troupes historically—Westerners, ethnically Arab Europeans, and Moroccans from social milieus that have not historically been sites of Gnawa recruitment.

THE GRAMMAR OF COLLABORATION

Abdellah, El Gourd, a m'allim or master of Gnawa music, was speaking with me in 2006. We had just returned to the northern tip of Morocco, Tangier, after traveling together down to the south of the country to attend a world music festival, the most popular domestic music festival, which features Gnawa music. Abdellah and his troupe had played one of the main stages with three non-Gnawa musicians: two from Paris—a Franco-Algerian violinist and a French guitarist—and a Moroccan percussionist from Casablanca.

The afternoon before the concert, Abdellah's troupe, which is named Dar Gnawa or The House of Gnawa in honor of their home base in Tangier, had met with the three newcomers and had played with them for about an hour. Originally, the festival organizers had requested that Abdellah and his troupe arrive in Essaouira two days before the festival started so that the visiting musicians could have more time to practice with the Dar Gnawa troupe. Abdellah explained to me that he had to refuse their request because some of the troupe's members had regular jobs that they couldn't leave so abruptly. The festival organizers were interested in improving the quality of the collaborative performances, but the working-class musicians saw it as an attempt to get more work for the same "wages"—missing work hours in their regular jobs lost them income, the supplemental funds supplied by the festival already barely covered that loss of income. When we got back to Tangier, I asked Abdellah how the practice session had gone. He had told me that the musicians were all respectful. Over the years, I had spoken to other foreigners at the festival and asked them what Gnawa music and culture signified to them. I was interested to see whether he had also noted the low level of knowledge of Moroccan culture among tourists, and so I was eager to know what kinds of questions the musicians had asked Abdellah, and how he had spoken to them about Gnawa traditions. My eagerness showed, and Abdellah's impatience did too.

"The speaking follows the music," he told me in English. In other words, that kind of interaction wasn't important at that first meeting—it was merely the "complement of the sentence"—something that came about after the "work" of musical

collaboration had already taken place. Abdellah's English was far more fluent than my Darija (Moroccan Arabic), and we also shared an interest in the grammar of Modern Standard Arabic. There are two kinds of clauses in MSA, the verbal clause (*al-jumla al-fa'liyya*) and the nominal clause (*al-jumla al-ismiyya*). The verbal clause is formed much like a typical English verbal sentence, with a subject (*faa'il*), a verb (*fa'l*), and an object of the verb (*maf'ul*)—the only difference is that the subject and the verb are witched in order in Arabic: VSO instead of the English SVO. The terminology used to describe a nominal clause is very different in both languages. Arabic ordinarily drops the copula—it does not mark the equivalent of the "linking verb" (e.g., "is"), so there are typically just two key elements in the Arabic nominal clause: a subject (*mubtada'*) and a predicate (*khabr*). In the *jumla fa'liyya* the subject tends to be marked in nominative case (*al-marfu'*) and the object in accusative case (*al-mansub*), which also applies to a variety of other objects (objects of the preposition are in the genitive case [*al-majrur*]). In contrast, in the *jumla ismiyya* the subject and the predicate are both typically always in nominative case. For someone like Abdellah, who was already trained in Modern Standard Arabic and in Spanish when he learned English, it would make sense to identify as *al-jumla al-ismiyya* an English clause built around a copula. (Abdellah told me that, at the age of 19, he originally took the specialized test for his Voice of America position in Spanish, but the following year he was told that he would have to re-take it in English. He taught himself English in order to study English materials for the test and thus keep his job.) As it tends to be understood in English

grammar, such clauses do not operate as regular verbal sentences. Instead, as in MSA, in such sentences both the subject and the predicate remain in nominative case. Thus, "He is I" is preferred instead of "He is me." The first noun (here, "he") is the subject, while the second noun (here, "I") would probably have been called in Abdellah's English grammar textbooks a "predicate noun" or more generally the "subject complement."

As a result, we might interpret this statement to be saying that talking about music is less important than making music, which he places in the subject position. This seems to be a good thing for a musician to argue, and Abdellah is committed to participation. When I spent time at Dar Gnawa, much more time was spent making music than talking about it. Early on in my time there, as I sat and appreciated their music, I felt insecure about joining in, since I'm not proficient on any instrument. At one point Abdellah told emphatically me to "Do something! Clap if that's all you can do" because it bothered him that I was merely appreciating or spectating and not participating. Afterwards, I clapped, and I even beat on a drum a few times. But I wonder if we can't push his meaning beyond a bias toward participation to take into account the fact that Abdellah chose to use the language of the static, conventional, and restricted *jumla ismiyya* to describe such collaborative exercises that were basically on-stage jam sessions. Would he have used the terminology of a *jumla fa'liyya*—dynamic, strong, vivid—to describe the music he produced with long-time collaborators like Archie Shepp and Randy Weston? He often spoke proudly of their respective

repertoires—the conventional musical idioms he used when playing with Shepp versus contrasting ones he used when playing with Weston, idioms that had developed over years of playing together, even decades in the case of Weston. Abdellah appeared less able to articulate details about his playing in the fleeting interactions at the festival.

And yet Abdellah didn't dismiss the collaboration completely. At first, what was key was the interaction itself, the play of timing and coordination among participants within a sequentially ordered performance. "Musicians know the music," he said—they know their own bodies and capabilities. This on-stage performance is something being newly created, which is why "they must create a space before they jump into it." They have to trust one other, to catch and carry and rely on one another. "If the musicians respect one another, they will prepare one another to enter the space." The idea that musical performance can be compared to a conversation is not new. Accepting that performance is essentially a communicative phenomenon (Bauman 1984), Monson's (1996) groundbreaking work on improvisation and interaction in jazz convincingly demonstrates that "jazz can be seen as a musical language, improvisation as musical conversation, and good improvisation as talking or 'saying something'" (1996:73). Further, the dialogic nature of African-derived musics lends them particularly well to conversation analysis (Berliner 1999). The onstage interaction between Gnawa and non-Gnawa is dialogic, with the musicians producing a co-constructed "narrative" of sorts (Kapchan 1996, 2007; Keil & Feld 1994) in which "participatory discrepancies" (Keil

1995, 1994) serve as a means by which "repair" sequences within the narrative can lead to a closer understanding of the process of co-construction (Monson 1996).

Needless to say, the space that is being created is hybrid, multiple, and new; nevertheless, there still remain questions of ownership and belonging: To whom does this performance space belong? How is it appropriated or allocated? This was a point of contention for Abdellah. This was only his second invitation to Essaouira in nine years. The first time he had gone was back in the 1990s. He told me that at that time he had been giving an interview to a journalist and had gone "off-script": When asked about the Gnawa music being played, he replied that it wasn't Gnawa music. When pushed to amplify, he gave his honest opinion that the music being played on stage was world music or pop music, not Gnawa music. He told me that he later realized that this statement had embarrassed the festival organizers. But given that Gnawa performers and non-Gnawa performers were sharing the stage, and the Gnawa performers were far more familiar with the pop and jazz styles of the visitors than vice versa, is there any way that the Essaouira stage can be considered a Gnawa space? I think that it can, for exactly that reason. Even though the music being produced was a hybrid style, in the musical exchange the more dominant position was held the Gnawa performers. It's true that they were being required to transpose their music, but they had a better idea of what lay before them, what they were transposing *to*, than the visitors, many of whom were playing catch-up. This asymmetry results from the fact that Western styles and genres are freely available and well-known in Morocco, whereas Moroccan music exists in the

West only in specialty stores in large urban centers, in manipulated, fragmentary "slices" of sound (on movie soundtracks, for example), or on the Internet on French- or Arabic-language sites that might be difficult for some Americans and Europeans to navigate. In contrast, American and European pop get daily radio play in Morocco, and cassettes and CDs are available for purchase in even the smallest towns.

TRANSPOSITION OF IDENTITIES

The space of performance in Gnawa ritual is a sacred space dedicated at the beginning of an all-night lila ceremony to the performance of spirit possession. It is somewhat contradictory that a religious form so particular and restricted should be connected with a musical style that crosses boundaries so freely (Kapchan 2007). Thomas Csordas (2007) has recently proposed that two aspects of religions seem to favor their universal appeal: portable practice and transposable message. By portable practice he intends that the rites are easily learned and that those who perform them do not need to commit to an ideological or institutional apparatus. Moreover, there is little esoteric knowledge to be mastered, and what knowledge exists is not tied to a specific cultural context. By transposable message, Csordas speaks to the capacity for its message to be transformed to other cultural contexts and universalized to all: "The basis of appeal contained in religious tenets, premises, or promises can find footing across a diversity of linguistic and cultural settings" (Csordas 2007:261). Csordas defines religion as "phenomenologically predicated on and culturally elaborated from a

primordial sense of alterity or otherness... an elementary structure of embodied existence" (261). Such a technical and objective definition of religion is not really suitable for my project, but I hope that we can still find some fruitful moments of creative parallelism between Csordas' subject and my own. From a Moroccan Muslim perspective, Gnawa beliefs and practices are not religious, although they are associated with spiritual things. Nevertheless, from the perspective of a religious scholar, the Gnawa lila might look like a religious ritual. So we can argue that the problem with the Gnawa lila is that while its message is quite transposable, its practice is certainly not portable, at least not in the fullest undertaking of the ritual.

At the most basic, the Gnawa message might be summed up in the idea that we can maintain an uneasy but ultimately sustainable relationship with the spirits through trance (Kapchan 2007), a relationship that is marked, moreover, less by bitterness and death than by sweetness and life (Hell ND), even as a feeling of dread and loss remains palpable (Swedenburg ND, Fuson 2001). Its practice, however, is not portable without a strong tolerance for animal sacrifice, a long-term commitment to apprenticeship, and a schedule that is flexible enough to sustain long periods of rituals. Professionals who officiate the ceremonies spend years gaining the necessary knowledge, which is difficult to learn and quite extensive for non-Moroccans and non-Muslims. Gnawa practice writ large is necessarily linked to Moroccan "popular religion," particularly with its emphasis on blood sacrifice and conventions of ecstatic ritualized performance that can involve cutting, burning, and poisoning oneself. Finally, the full ceremony can take two

long nights. These requirements pose less of a challenge among communities with high unemployment, strong informal economies, and flexible working arrangements, but they can present a problem to others, particularly those in the industrialized West.

The apparent solution to this problem is to transform the practice in order to make it more portable, and this has been done, most significantly with the introduction of shorter ceremonies. But the point I wish to make with regard to Csordas is that the transposition of the Gnawa message is enabled by the fact that the practice (supposedly non-portable) has a musical element that is as portable as any musical form (Feld 2004a). Moreover, since Csordas' topic for reflection concerns the globalization of religion, it makes sense to examine how Gnawa music and trance have fared in the global market (Kapchan 2007). Certainly central to Gnawa globalization has been what Csordas terms "mediatization"—the dissemination of materials through electronic media—a topic to which I return momentarily.

Before I do that, though, it's necessary to specify a few features of Csordas' argument concerning globalization and religion that I have some difficulty integrating into my project. First, it is difficult to know from this article how Csordas recognizes, measures, and evaluates the incidence of "globalization." Does he consider globalization to indicate merely the actual extension of a religious practice to another part of the world? How does he measure distance, and how does he limit time? For example, what enables him to distinguish the extension of Christianity from Palestine to Asia Minor and Greece in the first century C.E. (presumably not globalization) from the

extension of Mormonism from Utah to Samoa in the twentieth century (globalization)? There appear to be some unquestioned assumptions here based the simple application of world-systems theories (e.g., Gunder Frank 1995) without attending to the arguments of some of their sympathetic critics (e.g., Abu-Lughod 1989). A broader perspective on the non-European origins of the "integrated global system" might be in order. Moreover, it is unclear how exactly Csordas defines "globalization." He poses a somewhat simplistic dichotomy between a grim Marxist judgment of neocolonialism vs. the speculation of an airy "postmodern free-floating-signifier image," reproducing the very dichotomy presented by Stokes (2004) that opposes despairing Marxist political-economic judgments to joyful capitalism-friendly judgments of cultural hybridity. Although it appears that Cordas uncritically valorizes a crude hybridity argument, I can't declare that this is the case. Nevertheless, Csordas does not explicitly make somewhat more complex point that market-oriented trends are unstable and resist control while local signification varies (hybridity), even as the exploitation of the poor by the wealthy under global financial capitalism continues under a singular capitalist global system (political economy). In other words, we don't have to give up one premise ("no single entity controls capitalism") to accept another one ("exploitation continues according to a singular logic"). There is no necessary dichotomy.

More to the point, when Csordas proposes that when Skylab fell from orbit in 1979-1980 and provoked worldwide millennial crises, it was an example of "the local religious imagination tak[ing] up the encroachments of global economy and

technology" (262). I can't imagine how the significance of Skylab in this situation is any way constructed as a cultural artifact differently from, say, Krakatoa or, for that matter, day and night, monthly cycles, tides, or growing and harvesting seasons. All of these are "global" in Csordas' sense. I'm not saying that he is alone in using global to refer simply to "things that happen to the whole world in our present era"—this is common enough among anthropologists, including others for whose work I have great respect, and whose work is more directly oriented toward transnational political economy, such as Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2000, 2005). I don't claim any special understanding of the term "global"—if anything, I claim less understanding than many. However, when I use the term, I feel unable to do anything other than restrict it so as to preserve its utility. Therefore, for my purposes here, I try to connect the "global" to ways of thinking and the "local" to ways of acting. I'm following Karatani (2004) here, who is also unable to look at the axes of particular-general and individual-universal as anything but dissimilar ways of examining and evaluating evidence. This perspective can be illustrated by the phrase "think globally, act locally": We can only think globally—the global is a fiction best conceived through rational thought—and any action is local, or empirically verifiable. Skylab was a local event, and each individual response to Skylab was also local. For me, there is no access to a "global" view of Skylab except that which can be constructed in an argument. Its global nature is not empirically verifiable, because to verify it would demand evidence from every corner of the world. To falsify the claim, all one would have to do would be to turn up a situation

in Borneo or Guyana where a group asks "What's Skylab?" and suddenly it could be proven not to have been global after all, but localized only to those populations that had access to international news media or who could see the burning object in the sky, unobscured by clouds or trees. Globalization is a powerful idea and correctly connected to universal perspective, whether religious or economic. The assertion of the "globe," the whole world, is only something a god could do, or a capitalist.

Unsurprisingly, Csordas himself arrives at a very similar end. After speaking simply of globalization *and* religion, and then of the more interesting of the globalization *of* religion, Csordas finds greatest interest in the idea of globalization *as* religion. He sees this happening in two ways. First, globalization is a religion in a weak sense: The people who believe in globalization follow its tenets like religious people follow a doctrine. This is not unusual, nor is it very profound, particularly after the spectacular financial failures in the fall of 2008, when thousands of business professionals were revealed to have misplaced their foolishly optimistic faith (and with it the fortunes of millions) in infinitely rising real estate values. The second sense, the stronger sense, is that globalization itself might be a religious phenomenon:

> Does it possess a mythic structure, an eschatological promise, a soteriological message, a magical spontaneity, a moral imperative, a dogmatic inevitability, a demonic urge, an inquisitional universality, a structure of alterity or Otherness that is at some level inescapably religious? (Csordas 2007:265)

It appears to me that Csordas here is talking no longer about globalization but about capitalism, and making a point that Marx made in Volume I of *Capital*:

> A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a value in use, there is nothing mysterious about it. .... But, so soon as [a table] steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than "table-turning" ever was. (cited in Tucker 1978:319-320)

Both Marx and Csordas find capitalism to be much more like a religion than it is like any other social institution. However, Marx differs from Csordas by focusing on a much more mundane event. Instead of looking at Skylab falling from the sky, Marx looks at the construction and sale of a table. It's hard to imagine how a heavenly body burning into the atmosphere might *not* be taken to hold religious significance. A much more difficult, more everyday, and thus more necessary task, is to discover how something so common as a table, or a T-shirt, or a handbag, might also command all these elements—myth, eschatology, salvation, magic, morality, dogmatism, demons, universality, and alterity.

Such a perspective is limiting, but it also solves a conundrum: What is the globalization of Gnawa music and culture? How can we measure it? We can't. All we

can measure empirically are the various "local" manifestations of Gnawa music and culture, in a variety of different contexts. The fragmentation thesis of free-floating signifiers—first proposed beginning in the 1950s by European anti-Stalinist and anti-Soviet communists but readily adopted and deployed by anti-communist neoliberal postmodernists in the 1980s (Karatani 2004)—proposes that capitalism is not directed or controlled. This is a perfectly acceptable conclusion. Moreover, it is backed up by empirical evidence, not the least of which was the collapse of Soviet state-sponsored capitalism after 1989. I could discover no articulations by Moroccan Gnawa musicians that they were being exploited by global capital, a conclusion supported by Kapchan (2007) and by Hell (2002). If anything, they were profiting comparatively well from the increased interest in their music. Indeed, Gnawa as a signifier seems to be even more "free-floating" than most, having become attached to all kinds of musical and personal styles since the 1990s. Nevertheless, from a more rationalist or religious perspective, I can see how it would be possible as well to "think" a global context wherein Gnawa identities hold an exploitable and exploited position.

My perspectives on the transposition of music within global culture are influenced here by the work of ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes, among others. In a review article, Stokes (2004) outlines recent theoretical perspectives of ethnomusicologists responding to the effects of the "global order" on music and through music. He distinguishes between two general trends in ethnomusicology, and though he cautions against simplistic understanding of these trends, he does note that they might

appear to reflect the classic split between Marxist and Weberian perspectives. The first, which Stokes demonstrates using the work of Veit Erlmann, develops a postcolonial critique of the global imagination through a Frederic Jameson-inspired analysis of the ways late capitalism appears to be "a system geared … toward the orderly production and consumption of difference" (Stokes 2004:48). The cultural economy of late modernity continues to articulate the systemic crisis that is endemic to colonialism. In contrast, Stokes argues, the second broad perspective remains hesitant to assign an overall logic to global cultural flows. This view is demonstrated through the arguments of Mark Slobin, who conceives a world along lines described using Arjun Appadurai's language of "-scapes." This view calls for localized, linguistic, nuanced critiques of the various and often-contradictory ways these structures (ethnoscapes, mediascapes, etc.) are able to "articulate particular translocal musical contexts" (49).

Before calling for the "renewed commitment to detailed ethnographic and historical descriptions" (Stokes 2004:50) that, by itself, I argue above to be insufficient, Stokes notes that two scholars, Les Back (1995-1996) and Ted Swedenburg (2001), have shown particular fluency in making a convincing case for the "emancipatory potential for 'globalization from below' within a specific Marxian framework" (50). Their kind of analysis avoids what Stokes makes clear to state is a crude and reductive stereotype, that researchers can appear to be conducting either a "pessimistic Marxian critique" or betraying "an optimistic radical liberalism" (50). In his insightful rendering of the place of Pakistani-British reggae singer Apache Indian, Back (1995-1996) rejects

Stuart Hall's position that, given the choice between essential primordialism and postmodern pluralism for identity construction, strategies for political mobilization might require some closure. In contrast, Back argues that alternatives include a "politics of the multiple that refuses the confines of the Subject while avoiding any banal form of assimilationism" (1995-1996:146). While he refrains from supporting the ways cultural hybridity has been "marketed and reterritorialised to satiate the saccharin desires of corporate multiculturalism," Back also argues strongly that "sacrificing certitude for fragmentation may bring about new political possibilities" (147). Echoing Stokes, Back, too, supports approaches that "remain sensitive to the particularities of 'the local' while being alert to the global matrices of diaspora cultures" (147). Stokes and Back both call on ethnomusicologists to conduct finely grained, historically specific analysis that also traces the roots and routes of global capital forces, the "local globalization" (Swedenburg 2000) of popular music.

Stokes also includes a strong critique of some analyses of discourses about world music that valorize their hybridity. The movement by critics and scholars probably mirrors an equivalent trend in audiences. In such cases, the authenticity/purity argument has merely been inverted and remains salient, such that hybridity has become an authenticating force for world music (2004:61). Stokes is correct to state that such a stance has several shortcomings. First, in this simplistic structure (hybrid equals authentic), it can exoticize hybridity. Second, it can nostalgically and romantically assume resistance, since many of these hybrid-music producers are influenced by rock-

n-roll and other oppositional musics from the West, which, while they might signify youth rebellion to Western listeners, do not necessarily mean the same thing within non-Western cultural contexts. Third, in its opposition to the "official" pure musics supported by national folklore troupes, the perspective delegitimates and dehistoricizes "the complex social and culture life of state-invented traditions" (Stokes 2004:61). Finally, Stokes confirms that emphasizing hybridity can obscure important distinctions between powerful and powerless, noting that "hybridizing strategies often have an elite, rather than subaltern, dynamic" (61), which can result not only in the erasure of "polluting" or "primitive" elements but also in the too-glib assumption of a necessary correspondence between aesthetics and everyday life. Many Gnawa musicians are involved in a far wider range of daily activities than playing music, such as holding down full-time jobs or trying to keep small businesses solvent, and to uncritically assume that their lives revolve around producing music would be a mistake.

PATHS CONVERGING AND DIVERGING

If globalization entails a spreading from one locality to another, particularly from one class, race, or ethnic position to others, then we need to examine how Gnawa are being recruited from new social milieus and initiated through new means. How do Gnawa accommodate newcomers to their traditional beliefs and practices, including their music? Based on my own observations as well as on research reports, I argue that they do so by focusing on two "conversion" paths whereby people have come to

identify with Gnawa music and culture: religious vocation and subcultural style. In addition to these two, there are at least three other ways of understanding Gnawa identification: (1) as an ethnicity, by which new adherents must prove their place with their mastery over language and culture; (2) as a musical genre, whereby the authenticity of a conversion is detected aurally through hearing the musician's technical proficiency and the knowledge of songs and lyrics; and (3) as racially marked minority, in which the heritage and legacy of enslavement and oppression is seen in the phenotypic skin and features—as well as the stereotypic poverty and social exclusion—of the black musician. These are important as well, and I feel that I have done some justice to them in other sections of this dissertation. Here, though, I wish to focus on the two paths of *Gnawa as a religious vocation*, involving traditional conversion over many years, and *Gnawa as a subcultural style*, whereby through the use of commodities as money, young Moroccans buy into a Gnawa identity, which in turn buys them social acceptance.

These two paths are also intricately connected to each other and to ethnicity, racialization, and musical genre. First, Gnawa's status as a religious vocation is pre-eminent in the academic literature. Ted Swedenburg's (ND) primary focus on music does not prevent him from recognizing "the Gnawa as a popular religious association or sect (*ta'ifa*), with ethnic minority roots, rather than as an ethnic minority *per se*" (Swedenburg ND:2). Gnawa membership is less dependent on language and culture, and more dependent on a particular relationship with the spirits, and yet ethnicity

remains important. Second, Gnawa ethnohistories recall numerous West African identities, such as Bambara, Hausa, Fulfulde, etc. Yet despite the lack of concrete genealogies back to specific West African ethnic groups, anthropologists like Viviana Paques (1975, 1978, 1991) have also noted that Gnawa form a kind of ethnicity within Morocco, as least sharing features of their cosmologies with West African groups. Third, the ties to West Africa are reinforced for many who listen hear the songs played during ceremonies. Scales are pentatonic and sound unlike much popular or folk music of Morocco (Schuyler 1997). Fourth, Gnawa have historically tended to be among those Moroccans marked racially as black. Most black Moroccans do not identify as Gnawa, and most black Moroccans are likely not descended from slaves. Nevertheless, Gnawa culture has been identified with black Moroccans and blackness with enslavement (El Hamel 2002). Moreover, blacks are over-represented toward the lower socioeconomic levels of Moroccan society. Finally, however, in a movement that began in the 1970s but rapidly increased in the early 1990s, Gnawa musical and material artifacts have come to be associated with youth subcultural styles and marketed as such. But even this subcultural movement is doubly connected to commodified blackness and ethnicized popular music.

The ethnographic case is rich for analysis, but I must limit my focus to conversion—religion, pop culture, and money. It is true that these set up a sort of natural opposition—faith vs. commerce—but both also share a deep connection through the concept of conversion. It is important to note that any and all of these processes—

religious vocation, ethnic identification, musical practice, racialized social status, and subcultural consumption—may be present at once in the path of a single individual.

We may begin with "traditional" Gnawa conversion in the religious sense. I'm using the term "traditional" here to refer to the traditions of social scientists like myself. In this kind of conversion in the literature, a young Moroccan, perhaps in his or her twenties, becomes attracted to the possession trance dancing or the music of the Gnawa and begins attending lilas, all-night healing ceremonies. Perhaps the young person has an affliction that needs healing. In any case, he or she might spend up to a year or so attending lilas in the outer of three concentric rings that Hell proposed in Chapter 2 of *Le tourbillon des génies* (2002)—the audience of pure spectators. If the young person has an affliction or is possessed by a spirit, he or she might move into the second ring, which is made up of the clients of the Gnawa who have paid money or have attended to seek healing for a particular affliction. These clients wait until the song that is played is the one associated with their possessing spirit, and then they dance in distinctive styles. Finally, after several years of working the spirits, a young person might become initiated into the inner circle of the local group, which is organized around a *muqaddim*/*muqadma* (or spiritual professional), one or more *shuwafs*/*shuwafas* (or clairvoyants), and a *m'allim* (or musical master) and his troupe of musicians. According to Hell and others, the whole path from interested spectator to master musician or spiritual professional takes a decade on average. The path to initiation—which gives one authority to call oneself a Gnawi or Gnawiyya—might take two to five years. Many

non-Moroccans have become initiated into a local order, moving from the middle ring to the inner ring. A few have even become m'allims or moqadmas. These have been given authority by a m'allim to conduct ceremonies on their own. In any case, I want to draw attention to the tremendous investment of time and, as a result, money, that following such a path demands.

CONCLUSION: MUSIC, CULTURE AND TRANSNATIONAL REGGAETON

Initiatory and subcultural identities can be distinguished, but only because they are usually found in counterpoint to one another. In a video on Youtube since late 2007, singer and rapper Elam Jay teamed up with Gnawa musicians to produce the single and video, "Gnawi-Tone." The reference was to reggaeton, the style of music developed from Jamaican dancehall by rappers in Venezuela and Panama that then moved around the world in 2006 via Puerto Rico and New York City (Marshall 2006). In the essay "We Use So Many Snares," Marshall describes the process by which what was called "Spanish reggae" in 2002 came to light as a new and vibrant style by the summer of 2003. The most distinctive feature of the new style was its 3-3-2 rhythm, two triplets followed by a double beat. The subtle and swift interplay between double and triple rhythm is a key characteristic of Gnawa music as well as of reggaeton. Marshall identifies the 3-3-2 rhythm as the "riddim" of reggae (hence the "reggae" of reggaeton) even though the beat is found in numerous other Caribbean styles, such as soca, son, salsa, meringue, etc. What is distinctive about reggaeton, though, is the fact that it

features the beat "sped up" and rendered electronically—this was done by Jamaican dancehall deejays in the late 1980s, as they "juiced up" reggae beats for the dance floor. Afro-Panamanians came to produce dancehall in New York in the 1990s, and they took it back to Panama, whereupon it spread around the Spanish Caribbean, particularly Puerto Rico, and eventually developed into the hip-hop/dancehall hybrid reggaeton (whence the "ton" of reggaeton). From Puerto Rico reggaeton returned to New York securely under the control of Puerto Ricans, where it simmered from 2002 to 2004 before going mainstream via the Latin-Grammy-winning hit "Gasolina" by Daddy Yankee. "Gasolina" charted on Billboard and around the world in 2005. The lyrics establish a sexual metaphor for the hook: (male voice) *A ella le gusta la gasolina* ("She likes gasoline") / (female voice) *Da me mas gasolina!* ("Give me more gasoline!"); nevertheless, perhaps the ongoing US conquest of Iraq in 2006 and its ensuing control over Arab oil wealth (which formed the subject of many conversations while I was in Tangier) provide an explanation for why that single was so popular in Tangier that spring and summer. I heard it incessantly. By the time I left in the fall, reggaeton compilation CDs produced in Holland by Moroccan-Dutch deejays were available on the street in Tangier.

Given the fact that both Gnawa music and reggaeton share similar rhythmic structures, it was only a matter of time before Gnawa reggaeton was produced, so I was not surprised to see the video Gnawi-Tone video featured in 2007 on a Moroccan website. On the video, one of the musicians who is uncredited is Mustapha Baqbou,

now a highly respected m'allim, perhaps one of the most highly respected in Morocco since Hmida Boussou died in 2006 (Bensalmia 2006). Baqbou is uncredited, but we can see him playing the hajhuj in the video, in a café, in the background. Baqbou played with the Moroccan pop supergroup Jil Jilala back in the early 1980s. His hajhuj-playing (Gnawa) predecessor in that group was Muhammad Derhem, who is also the principal singer in this video. The third vocalist is Elam Jay, who raps; in dancehall, this is known as "toasting" (Back 1995-1996). Derhem is not a m'allim, but he is an initiate who, like Hassan Hakmoun, knows how to play the hajhouj and sing. Derhem's life has been marked by using his Gnawa identity to make a living. And his chosen stage name means, literally, "money."

The video begins with a shot of Baqbou playing ginbri on a balcony, but the shot quickly swoops down to follow Derhem as he walks through the streets of a typical Moroccan madina, singing a typical-sounding Gnawa pop song. An elderly man is watching a program on an old television set outside a shop. As Derhem passes by, he hits the TV, and the shot draws down to the television, physically carrying the viewer from the "unmediated" street into the electronically mediated world of television. The "Gnawa" part of the intro over, Elam Jay is revealed onscreen on the television to begin the "reggaeton" intro segment. The early shots of Elam Jay reveal him to be on a lavish set, in costume, rapping in French, English, and Darija into a large microphone suspended from above. It looks like a typical rap video. Jay is wearing muscle shirts, gold jewelry, and cornrows—when I showed the video to my students in North

Carolina, they said they thought he looked and sounded like American R-and-B singer D'Angelo. The Gnawa musicians and the rapper are subsequently united during a rhythm break. The camera follows seagulls flying about a castle's ramparts, the iconic scenery from the Essaouira casbah used famously by Orson Welles as the set for his film adaptation of Othello (1952). In the video, Jay and a troupe of Gnawa dancers are hooded. One of the dancers begins a beatbox rhythm with his mouth, which is then expanded into the return of the reggaeton beat, now mixed with the ginbri's strumming to produce a hybrid Gnawa-reggaeton sound. As Jay and the dancers execute their modified hip-hop performance, the dancers are spinning tassels on their caps, a distinct element in Gnawa street performance. Later shots return to Derhem, finding him now in another typically "everyman" working-class setting: a Moroccan cafe. It is here that Baqbou makes his first reappearance, sitting at one of the tables and playing the ginbri as Derhem sings before his audience.

After a second break, the set moves on to a temporary stage set up in Muhammad V Square in Casablanca (1920), distinct for the "Mooresque" architecture surrounding it. This setting enacts a nationalist and popular resolution of the tension heretofore maintained between the elite settings of Elam Jay (the mediated commercial identities of a hip-hop video) and the competing popular settings of Muhammad Derhem (the local and "unmediated" commercial identities of street and cafe). On the stage, Derhem and Jay stand side-by-side, enacting their formal equivalence, while Baqbou continues to appear from time to time in shots, usually backstage with the

dancers. We can read Baqbou as indexing an initiatory-Gnawa imprimature of authenticity and Elam Jay as indexing the modernity of transnational capital. Derhem, however, represents a reconciled statement of account—he is pure money, mediating between the two and converting the commodity of Gnawa culture into the commodity of global popular culture, back and forth.

In the illustration above, I wish to draw attention to the triad of Baqbou-Derhem-E.Lam Jay. We have a successful collaboration between three agents: a prospective reggaeton artist—Elam Jay, who spent his youth in Switzerland, is actually better known as a singer of devotional songs in the soulful style of British Muslim-pop singer Sami Yusuf; an established Gnawa pop singer—Derhem is not a m'allim; and a respected m'allim experienced in pop styles—Baqbou was a member of the Moroccan pop-folk group Jil Jilala after Derhem left it. This kind of collaboration appears poised to successfully enable newcomers' access to Gnawa identities while maintaining some sort of Gnawa control over defining identities and genres. The "performance space" is not under the direct control of a government—the video was financed privately, apparently in conjunction with an advertising campaign for the Moroccan telephone company Wana (Jeff Callen, personal communication), which is owned by a Moroccan holding company that appears to be connected to the Moroccan royal family. The video was distributed via the Internet. While this is a negotiated space, and Gnawa have little strength in the struggle for control over capital, they do control social capital to the extent that Gnawa pop seems to require the maintenance of very real ties to initiatory

identities. However Gnawa is defined generically, the figure of the m'allim remains a fixture, and m'allims must be made locally, after long apprenticeships, within the religious-initiatory context. Through such innovative collaborations between initiatory Gnawa, popular Gnawa, and global pop-cultural styles, as exemplified by the Gnawi-Tone video, Gnawa musicians were be able to resolve tensions between Gnawa as a religious initiation and Gnawa as a global commodity.

How do Moroccans subjects determine their own identities? And how can metaphors of transposition and conversion help elucidate transnational flows of music and culture? In this section, I have proposed that Moroccan modernity is connected to European capitalist modernity but that it is not completely derivative from it. Instead, Moroccans themselves make active decisions to identify themselves. These decisions are limited and constrained by conventional patterns of conversion and transposition, but they in turn serve to engage Moroccan subjects in broader transnational flows of music and culture.

SECTION III: PILGRIMAGE AND FESTIVAL

"Pilgrims are, and always have been, tourists of a certain ilk."

Deborah Kapchan (2008:481)

INTRODUCTION

Morocco is well known for the place pilgrimage holds in its religious landscape. Each year, millions of Moroccans visit the graves and holy sites of long-dead virtuous men and women, zawaya, and other sacred sites. Much of this activity overlaps with tourism, more so since incomes of Moroccans have risen since the mid-1990s. Particularly for the *marocains residents a l'etranger* (MREs), Moroccans living and working in Europe, a trip home during summer months has become itself a kind of pilgrimage to the land of faith. Many of these trips are organized around visits to an ever-increasing number of religious-themed music festivals. In what ways have religious journeys become re-inscribed in modes of tourism and popular commodity consumption? This chapter relies on ethnographic research conducted between 2001 and 2006. During this period I attended the Essaouira Gnawa festival three times, the Fes sacred music festival twice, the Tangier jazz festival once, and two psychedelic trance raves, one in the desert and one on the beach. I visited all of these as an attendee except the jazz festival—I was privy to some off-stage jam sessions and socialization—

and my third Gnawa festival in 2006, which I attended backstage and "undercover" as a very minor non-performing performer, a kind of official "groupie."

My interest in the festival began with my interest in Gnawa music and culture, but as I continued to return to the festival over the years, I found that it grew much bigger than anyone could have foreseen, and its growth is not isolated—numerous competitors have developed alongside it. This tremendous growth has led me to consider the quesion, what is the role of the international cultural festival in mediating the transnational flows of music and culture? I propose that these festivals have developed as alternative and secular *musems*, and that those visiting these festivals have become something similar to pilgrims (Kapchan 2008). Festivals have been developed in other regions of Morocco and around other kinds of music. But the Essaouira festival is held in the South, and it is inspired by and features the music and culture of a racialized Moroccan subculture whose roots like in systematic enslavement and who trace their heritage to sub-Saharan West Africa. Moreover, Gnawa music indexes a local variety of Blackness for Moroccan audiences, one that is intimately connected to heterodox religious practices. Finally, during the 1990s and into the early 2000s, i.e., after the lifting of a two-decade-long period of political repression, the Gnawa festival became the largest and most popular of all the summer music festivals in Morocco. Taken together, these fact suggest that changes in Moroccan society, including the religious, political, economic, and cultural landscape, can be determined to be oriented in some way toward a recognition of Morocco's African identity, at least insofar as that

identity is expressed through shifting patterns in the consumption of popular culture. These patterns have been shifting, in turn, in relation to global movements relative to capitalist modernity.

Chapter 6: The Promise of Sonic Translation in Morocco

The name of the Gnawa festival changed between its first and subsequent editions. According to Zineb Majdouli (2007), the festival was entitled *Festival Gnaoua d'Essaouira* in 1998, the "Gnawa Festival of Essaouira."[12] After that first year, Majdouli relates, it became clear to the organizers that the festival was not merely about Gnawa music but also about world music, and so the festival's title was changed to *Festival d'Essaouira Gnaoua Musiques du Monde*. This title has been rendered in English on the official website of the festival as "Gnaoua Festival and Musics of the World of Essaouira."[13] The decision to change the title may have partly been a commercial decision—promoters needed to broaden the horizons of the festival in order to bring headlining acts—Cheb Mami, Rachid Taha—that had nothing to do with Gnawa music but that would attract Moroccan audiences. It seems to me, though, that the decision went deeper: Apart from these headliners, all the other concerts attempted to showcase collaboration in one form or another.

Collaboration is endemic to musical performance. While all musics are composed and performed under interactive conditions of some kind, there appears to be some particular efficacy in African-derived musics for interaction to produce a groove (Keil and Feld 1994). A key characteristic of West African and other musics is the

[12] Majdouli's book is directly relevant to this project. Unfortunately, I did not read it in time to incorporate her arguments, so that task will have to left to a future version.
[13] At http://www.festival-gnaoua.net/11eme-edition.html?lang=en, viewed 22 June 2009.

existence of participatory discrepancies, slightly off-tempo rhythms and tones that serve to communicate with the other musicians (Keil 1994, 1995). These participatory discrepancies hold creative potential for the groove (Keil and Feld 1994). The creation of participatory discrepancies in rhythm is accomplished through a "temporal 'stretching' in which interlocking parts purposefully do not articulate a precise duple or triple division of the pulse" (Waterman 1990:215). Rather, there is some indeterminacy in the division of time, a vibratory dissonance in which the rhythm is pulled apart. This is a participatory art of timing, since it requires members of the ensemble, as well as listeners, to find this dissonance and establish themselves along that narrow peak. If players pull too far from the subdivision of time, they risk true dissonance, bad music, but if they play too closely to the established subdivision, they risk formally precise and correct but completely lifeless music. The tension between these two poles creates the groove (Waterman 1990). It is also a source of social construction (Keil 1995).[14] The change in the title of the festival was largely to reflect the festival's focus on collaborative approaches to Gnawa music.

Just as performers must learn to collaborate, so must the diverse audiences listening to them become "perennial coauditors" (Kapchan 2008) of these new hybrid genres. Deborah Kapchan calls this impetus toward mutual understanding on a sonic

[14] An argument could be made concerning the role of African-derived music in social construction based on the application of interactional analysis (Schegloff 1968; Kendon 1972, 1975) to the ethnography (Moerman 1988; Keating 2002; Streeck 2004) of music (Berliner 1994; Monson 1996). If I were to make the argument, though, I would use the deviant-case analysis of Schegloff (Ten Have 1999:15-17) to identify moments in Gnawa collaborations (and really, any communicative music) in which creative mistakes occur such that the musicians, in the course of repairing the mistake, find themselves carried into the groove (Keil 1994, 1995; Keil and Feld 1994).

level the "promise of sonic translation" (Kapchan 2008:467). Such a promise necessarily underlies any attempt at cross-cultural understanding and sharing, and it also forms a basis by which experiences of transnational cooperation can be considered plausible.

THE PROMISE OF SONIC TRANSLATION

The Fes Festival of World Sacred Music is the premier festival in Morocco in terms of international visibility by elite classes. European royalty and figures of international stature have attended—Bono and other members of the Irish rock group U2 attended in 2007—and the Dalai Lama played a key role in its establishment. This latter role was prompted by Faouzi Skali, a Moroccan anthropologist and leader in one of Morocco's most prestigious Sufi tariqas, who influenced the Dalai Lama to get involved. I attended some of the public concerts in 2001, standing in the back of a large crowd of rowdy teens. In 2002 I had better funding, and I managed to attend several of the concerts. It was rewarding to see such great musicians from all over the world and from such a variety of religious traditions—from Syria, France, the United States, Mauritania, Nepal, and many other places.

In addition to playing the elite foil to Essaouira's populism, the Fes festival also offered contrast over the question of collaboration. Here, there was not even a suggestion that the artistic integrity of the musician would be affected by an attempt at "jamming." Instead, the onus of collaboration was on the audience members to

"collaborate" in a joint attempt at appreciation. The immediate goal of audiences at such transnational festivals, Kapchan argues, is "to consume and sonically inhabit a multiplicity of ... cultures" (2008:470). Such an exercise is only possible due to the promise of sonic translation.

Kapchan does not intend to propose that such a promise can always, or even ever, fully, be kept. Sometimes the audiences were unable to connect at all with the musicians. Nevertheless, she focuses on the audience members' faith in the "ultimate translatability" of the messages being communicated through the music. Such good faith leads audiences to find new forms of social community, what she calls the "festive sacred" (Kapchan 2008:467).

TOURISM AND PILGRIMAGE IN MOROCCAN RELIGION

The question of religion is difficult in Morocco, since so much of popular culture can be interpreted both as religious and as not religious. On the one hand, scholars have recognized as religious attention to spirits, rituals, trances, altered states, pilgrimages, appeals to God and the saints, etc. Indeed, Dale Eickelman (1976) has characterized these "traditions of pilgrimage" as themselves indicative of the nature of "Moroccan Islam." At the same time, from another perspective, these various elements are not equivalent to "religion" in the sense my consultants held of the *deen* of Islam. Indeed, as I sat among members of a Gnawa *ta'ifa* (local group) in Tangier and listened to them discuss their sect's features, one thing was clear: All considered themselves

orthodox Muslims whose faith was not affected in the slightest by their "work" enabling possession by the various spirits of the Gnawa pantheon. They vigorously defended their practices against charges by more orthodox-minded Moroccans that they practice sorcery or charlatanism. In their view, belonging to their specific Gnawa *ta'ifa* made them better Muslims because it redirected their lives toward spiritual matters and kept them in a close, virtuous community. However, their work was just another part of everyday life as a Muslim and did not constitute anything religious by itself. I myself have great difficulty speaking on the nature of Moroccan Islam, since I have not mastered *fiqh*, Islamic jurisprudence, and particularly the Maliki school that is dominant in Morocco. (I have also not studied closely the Quran and the Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad in the original Arabic.) As a result I feel restricted from doing anything but accepting the conception of Islam as presented by my consultants. As I have reconsidered religious identification in Morocco, my study of local, indigenous terms for the various beliefs, practices, and conscious states that I had previously bundled together under the banner of "religious" has led me to wonder what else I might be missing in the many other "non-religious" aspects of Moroccan popular culture. So I am led away from formal religious structures (e.g., *fiqh* in Morocco) and beyond pseudo-religious structures (e.g., pilgrimages to holy sites) before settling to a focus on religious elements in avowedly secular structures (i.e., pop music festivals and raves).

Festival and pilgrimage have long genealogies in the academic literatures of anthropology, folklore, and Moroccan studies. In his detailed study of Moroccan ritual life, presented in two volumes in 1926, Edvard Westermarck (1968) raises the issue of "pagan survival"—the idea that Moroccan religious festivals that deviate from Muslim norms in other regions can be identified as an underlying paganism continuous with Morocco's pre-Islamic cultural past. Although such beliefs continue to enliven popular approaches to Gnawa music and other Moroccan styles (see Chapter 1), Abdellah Hammoudi (1993) finally puts that question to rest for academic approaches. Hammoudi concludes that, at least with regard to the Bilmawn festival of Ait Mizane in the High Atlas, nothing about the festival suggests that it is anything but an ordinary Muslim feast. Within the American tradition, Dale Eickelman's (1976) study of the role of religious life in Boujad finds an city whose very life depended on an annual pilgrimage to the *musem* of its saint, Sidi Mhammed Sherqi (d. 1601), such that the vigor and power of what Eickelman calls "maraboutic Islam" in Morocco can be correlated to the relative importance of Boujad vis-a-vis the rest of Morocco. Indeed, the health of the town and its status as a pilgrimage site can be measured by attendance at its annual festival. In this chapter, I am less interested in proving primordial origins for festivals than in asserting continuity of another kind, since music festivals are widely thought to be commercial and "new" ventures whose only provision for continuity is the folklorization of culture as a marketing ploy.

Victor Turner (1982) introduces festival in a more general sense. This book accompanied a concurrent exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum on festivals. As a result, its tone is less scholarly and more popular, as it anticipates non-specialist readers. One result of this tone is a return to the fact that the items curated come from ways of life that differ from non-Western ways of life, and many of the entries seem to take extra care to remind readers of connections and discontinuities. As I read over the selections, however, I was struck by how much such a tone might apply to my topic. The Moroccans making pilgrimages to Moroccan summer music and culture festivals operated on European calendars. For working-class and middle-class Europeans, the time of excess and freedom for the past 20 or 30 years has been the summer vacation period and particularly the month of August. *Marocains residents a l'etranger* tended to be working-class Europeans, but when they returned to Morocco, for that period of excess and transgression they resisted boundaries and were momentarily positioned in the Moroccan middle classes, who also took summer vacations from the hot and crowded interior cities to the cooler coastal resorts. As a result, the MRE attendees at the summer festivals experienced a bit of a rise in class position, as migrant laborers in Europe have done more generally in Moroccan society, with predictably unsettling effectsof the stability of Moroccan class alignments (McMurray 2001). Summer festivals thus enact a kind of anti-structure. In a Bakhtinian sense (Bakhtin 1984), festivals in Morocco afforded a sense of the carnivalesque, albeit carefully circumscribed and somewhat limited.

For Gnawa musicians and other performers, this summer vacation season also coincided with the work season. This was a time of travel and labor but also a festive time; most of them held other jobs that were mundane and busy during the fall, winter, and spring. For Turner, festivals are "'high tides,' 'peak experiences' in social life which mark an occasion or an event with ceremony, ritual, or festivity. People in all cultures recognize the need to set aside certain times and spaces for celebratory use, in which the possibility of personal and communal creativity may arise" (1982:11). For the members of Dar Gnawa, summer was a time of travel, expense accounts, late nights and slow days (see Kapchan 2007 for a description of Gnawa performers "on the road" in Europe).

Turner proposes three meanings of festival: interpretive, operational, and positional. The interpretive meaning speaks to the means by which participants make sense of the festival. Sometimes there are degrees of interpretation, with a privileged level or caste which has access to its "true" or esoteric meaning (1982:19). I'm not convinced that Gnawa members would consider their knowledge of the festival to be more "true," because the Essaouira festival is not really a part of Gnawa practice. It is a kind of secular *musem*, but the Gnawa form not a Sufi *tariqa* but a collection of local *taifas*; they have no shaykh, so there's not single, privileged perspective on the gathering. After the festival, however, the members of Dar Gnawa did follow Turner's model, re-hashing the festival experience and trying "to put into words, however lamely, what they have experienced in the 'meta-experience' of culturally stimulated

action," when they tried to evaluate the ways in which the festival, for them, "distill[ed] all other kinds of experience to draw out the part that [was] essential to each of them" (Turner 1982:19). Turner associates this kind of meaning with the ideology or beliefs, whether held by specialists or laypersons, of the community. By positional or situational meaning Turner intends its position within other Levi-Straussian symbolic structures, an analysis that I am unable to do at this point. However, Turner's appeal to operational meaning—the festival's social-scientific meaning within a social structural approach—is my major preoccupation in this chapter: What does the festival do in Moroccan society? This is the level of my social-scientific approach, but I'm not trying to operationalize the festival's interpretation on my own. Instead, I am interested in understanding how the interpretations that are articulated by participants and other positioned actors, including myself as an active participant and some sort of outside professional analyst, operate within larger questions of mine concerning Moroccan subjectivities, economies, and identities.

In Turner's edited volume, Roger Abrahams' chapter is particularly influential. One of the most plainly written and accessible of the chapters, its primary emphasis is on restoring the value of festivals to their local economies, a significance that Abrahams argues is lost on the typical attendee to the Smithsonian, who lives in a technologically advanced capitalist economy. In doing so, he appears to be speaking as well to many of the Moroccans who attend the Gnawa festival—they are also largely urban, either working-class or middle-class, and they live lives separated from agricultural cycles of

death, rebirth, fertility, and harvest (Morocco's urban population passed 50 percent of the total in the mid-1990s.) Abrahams argues that for agricultural people, there is a direct and deep connection between the terms of the festival and the way of life of the people. In agricultural societies, festivals mark the points at which workers can break from their labor in planting, cultivation, and harvest,

> "Those important times which permit a joyous, if anxious, contemplation of the procession of nature, these festivities call the people together for nothing more complicated than celebration. But it is precisely at these points of repose that the accumulated repertoire of expressive devices can be brought forth so that the message of the occasion is epitomized in each move and magnified by the very evidence of the profusion of sounds and symbols." (Abrahams 1982:166-167)

Summer festivals also take place in times of pause from the workweek, and for Moroccan migrants these periods are also times of socializing with extended family members, since the rise of single-family apartments has produced more nucleation of middle-class and rising middle-class Moroccan families (Kapchan 1996; McMurray 2001). They are also fecund times, when weddings can be planned because male workers are home and flush with their saved earnings (McMurray 2001). In such cases, marriage rites and seasonal festivals can coincide.

Summers are a time of joyous repose, and it makes sense that they would be marked as well by an accumulated repertoire of expressive devices. Moreover, summers are also "the plateaus of the year when in fact nothing important occurs... Festivals ...

must initiate their own energies, even as they organize the celebrants for mutual fun and profit" (Abrahams 1982:167). At root, festivals must make their own value. Those that falter and fail to attract celebrants, like Eickelman's Boujad musem, make their own failure.

In contrast to agricultural festivals, Abrahams finds that nostalgia plays a significant role in "our festivals": The ability to choose a festival to attend, the choice that accompanies modern subjectivity, is a positive force that contains its own negation, the loss of a sense of deep engagement with life cycles. The result is nostalgia, "a sentimental backward looking that capitalizes on the old festival vocabulary of intensification: now gigantism becomes a means of advertising and promotion; and miniaturization, often of the same symbolic object, produces the memento, the souvenir, the means by which one can recapture through memory the pleasure of the experience" (Abrahams 1982:171). Indeed, the Essaouira festival can be seen as a time of nostalgia for some mythical past when Gnawa troupes played lilas for a meal and a place to sleep (Hell 2002; Kapchan 2007). No one involved in the lilas really wants to return to such a time—particularly the Gnawa performers!—but the effervescence produced out of the nostalgia associated with an appeal to tradition leads to very large amplified speakers, huge crowds at "traditional lilas," and "big" m'allims who are household names in Morocco and mobbed by adoring fans. At the same time, compact disks of prior performances as well as all manner of tiny souvenirs are produced and sold (see Chapter 3 for my account of how such souvenirs are employed as emblems of identity).

At one level, pilgrimages in Morocco are deeply religious affairs. But musical tourism has transformed pilgrimages to reflect the pursuit of non-sacred commodities. In turn, pilgrims have come to imbue some of these commodities with sacred force. As a result, what has become of Moroccan religious identities? I present this chapter as a pilgrim and a tourist of a certain ilk (Kapchan 2008:481). In my first attendance at these festivals, I didn't yet realize I was making pilgrimages. But I as I returned a second time (and in the case of Essaouira, a third time), I realized that when I spoke to festival attendees, those who were repeat attendees sometimes considered themselves pilgrims too. They viewed their present experiences in light of previous ones. They compared this year to previous years, they met old friends and befriended new ones. They sought transcendent meaning, renewal and growth. And they spent money.

Chapter 7: Gnawa Festivals in Essaouira

In this chapter, I outline how my engagement with the Essaouira festival changed over the years. These changes resulted not only from my deeper intuitive grasp of Moroccan society and my increasing knowledge of Gnawa beliefs and practices; also, the changes stemmed from the shifting context of my engagement with the festivals. Although my engagements were unique to my particular mix of knowledges and competencies, they were also quite conventional. For my first visit in 2001, I was more-or-less an informed tourist. In 2002, I attended not as a tourist but as a researcher interested in everyday Moroccan lives, and I socialized more with working-class Essaouiris who expressed more than a bit of ambivalence about the festival. Finally, in 2006, I was involved alongside a third kind of insider: Among the dozens of Gnawa performers and their hangers-on, I was fully as inconspicuous as a 6-foot fair-skinned American could be. I'm not claiming an increasingly privileged or "insider" perspective. Nevertheless, as my objective engagement with the festival changed, so were my subjective experiences transformed.

Like the Egyptian state (Ali 2002), the Moroccan state played a role (however contradictory) within Moroccan society in modernizing the populace through attempting to impose progressive political attitudes, particularly in the period following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States. Within this context, however, the same freeing that enabled the graduates to protest their unemployment also granted

Islamists greater access to social mobilization. Many Islamists expressed opposition to Gnawa music and culture for a number of reasons. Some Islamist newspapers argued that the Gnawa practiced witchcraft or sorcery. They identified Gnawa culture with alcohol consumption, with Western musicians, with leading the youth astray, and with Jews.[15] The Jewish association came from Essaouira's formerly large Jewish population and the continued presence of a Jewish community there, a member of which was Andre Azoulay. Azoulay had the portfolio of special advisor to the king, and his efforts in support of the festival contributed to its success. However, as depicted in a petition signed by 24 prominent Moroccans and published in a 2002 issue of *Tel Quel* magazine, certain Islamist leaders and newspapers considered his position close to power to be the sign of an alleged Israeli conspiracy. The petitioners point to an article that was published in the newspaper *Attajdid* (associated with the Islamist Party for Justice and Democracy, PJD) and written by a Casablanca "pseudo-imam," Abdelbari Zemzami. The petitioners argued that exactly this sort of racist fear mongering led to, under the "fascist politics of the Sharon government," continued Jewish immigration to Israel and the continued displacement of Palestinians ("Halte au racisme anti-juif!" 2002:34). The signers called upon Moroccans to confirm the continued legitimacy of Jewish Moroccans as full citizens. By being associated with the Jewish minority of Morocco,

[15] In a note to her discussion of the anti-Zionist and leftist Moroccan Jewish activist Abraham Sefraty, Slymovics (2005) directs her readers to further sources on the political activism of Moroccan Jews (223 n. 34).

however, Gnawa are similarly cast by some Moroccans as unwanted foreigners, as outsiders.

2002: THE FESTIVAL REVISITED

I began this project with a description of my first visit to the Gnawa festival, in 2001. In the summer of 2002 I returned to Morocco with better funding, which meant I could come earlier and stay later. This time I had gone to Tangier first, to make contact with Abdellah El Gourd, the Gnawa m'allim I had "clicked with" the previous summer when Deborah had introduced us in his home, Dar Gnawa, in Tangier. Abdellah was welcoming, and I spent a few days there. Then I had gone on to Fes to attend the Fes Festival of Sacred Musics of the World (Kapchan 2008) with Deborah and Jonathan, and I also got to know some of the students in the language school. As a result, by the time I made the trip back to Essaouira, I was more familiar with Morocco and more competent in Moroccan Arabic.

At the Marrakech train station I got into a shared taxi to Essaouira. One of the people in the cab was Swiss man attending the festival for a second time who was relatively well informed about Gnawa culture and eager to see this year's acts. He was familiar with ethnographic interpretations of Gnawa beliefs and practices. I paid for an extra seat in order to make peace with my fellow passengers who were forced to accommodate my large frame next to them. I checked into the same beach hotel, but I had the idea that I could find a cheaper and more convenient place to stay if I could get

back to see some of the people I had met the previous summer. I found Najib again and greeted him before I went in search of Muhammad and Ahmad.

I found that Muhammad had disappeared. Ahmad was in sole possession of the shop, and it was clearly struggling, with reduced stocks. When I mentioned Muhammad's name, Ahmad responded with curses and invectives—he called Muhammad a thief and a crook, an embezzler who had been cheating Ahmad. He felt betrayed by Muhammad. It was sad to hear that my friends were no longer friends. But it made sense, since they were after all business partners and related on a professional level, and most businesses tend to go bankrupt eventually for one reason or another. I hung out again, this time with Ahmad.

I started pushing Ahmad to help me find a place to stay. He volunteered his own rooms in a building not far outside the madina walls. He rented a storeroom there for his music, and he also had a bedroom. He invited me to lunch at his home, too, on the following day, Tuesday before the festival. Ahmad had a four-year-old boy, an 18-month-old girl, and a lovely wife, and the meal was amazing. But I noticed that he wasn't very comfortable in his home—I got the impression he was smoking cigarettes with me in the salon only because I was there as a guest. He seemed more comfortable in his "bachelor's pad" about a mile closer to town, into which he had said I could move the following day. Wednesday morning I checked out of my hotel and went back to the shop with my suitcase, and at lunchtime we went and deposited my things at his room and he taught me how to come and go, which was a bit difficult. Finding the building

without street signs or numbers meant I needed to find the mosque, then remember which alleys to follow before turning up at the right door. I was to knock at the door and be admitted by the downstairs residents. The first time I tried to do it on my own, I got lost and had to call Ahmad to walk me through the streets by phone. He gave me a key for the door at the top of the stairs, which led to a central space with five rooms off of it: one was a kitchen, one a shower/toilet, a larger room was the residences of an older single man, and two smaller rooms were Ahmad's storeroom and his bedroom, where I kept my suitcase with my video camera and laptop. Ahmad gave me a key to my room as well. He came and socialized with me in the evenings.

During the days I met up a few times with some of the graduate students who had been taking Arabic in Fes. One of them, working on a PhD in English, spoke fluent French; they were both taking intermediate standard Arabic. They had made friends with some students from Casablanca, and we socialized a bit. One of the students had spiked his hair in a "fauxhawk," and I asked him about the more audacious punks and rastas in the crowds, with their tattoos, facial piercings, and expensive studded leather—were these from Paris or Madrid? He swore up and down that they had all come from Casablanca. The students were very proud of the cosmopolitan nature of their city. They were hard to understand—they mixed French slang and Moroccan slang in complex ways, and they didn't slow down very much, although they tried to use more a more formal register of Arabic to communicate with us. In general the concerts were as disappointing as before, with the exception of the set by Oumou Sangare, the great

Malian singer—she sang her own repertoire from the formerly exclusively male genre of hunting songs (Duran 2000), with little interference from collaborators. It was a truly magical set.

I tended to spend my mornings in cafes and hotels watching the World Cup—it was held in Korea and Japan in 2002, so the games came at awkward times for Mediterranean time zones, too early in the morning to be convenient or pleasant. Most of the time that I wasn't going to concerts, however, I spent with Ahmad and his friends. Aside from being busier than usual in his shop, Ahmad more-or-less ignored the festival and concerts. One night we watched a late movie in the room of one of the other residents; another time Ahmad took me to the market and had me buy meat and vegetables, and then we gave them to a small restaurant across from his apartment. I went to see a concert, and when I got back Ahmad had procured a big box of tiny, cold beers, and we feasted on the tagine with the other inhabitants, including the woman who lived downstairs.

My general impressions of that festival focus on the intense crowds and the terrible service in cafes and restaurants. Waiters jostled customers at the cafes and refused to make change, apparently hoping to get rid of them in order to get them to leave and be replaced with new customers. I began to look at the festival like Ahmad and his friends did—a profitable but crowded time of difficulty, something to be endured.

2006: BACKSTAGE PASS

By the summer of 2006 I had been living in Tangier since February and was close to all the members of Dar Gnawa. My wife, Rachel, had just left for the United States—we rented a car and drove around the north and to Fes before heading with her luggage to the airport in Casablanca, and then I drove the car it back up to Tangier and bought a train ticket for Marrakech. I didn't want to ride second-class. I had done that numerous times and it wasn't very comfortable, or so I thought to myself as I justified the added expense (around $30 instead of $15). I met Abdellah and his troupe in the glistening new Tangier train station and spoke with them as we waited for the train, but when the time came to board I went to my air-conditioned reserved seat at the front of the train. Upon arriving in Marrakech, though, I decided to stick with them, and they didn't graciously didn't mention my abandoning them earlier. They had their instruments and costumes, which wouldn't fit in a normal taxi, so they rented two minivans at the train station to take them to the bus station. We sat there for a couple of hours, waiting for the bus to fill. At one point Abdellah bought me breakfast at the bus station's restaurant. Finally we took off for Essaouira. I still hadn't decided whether to ask Abdellah about staying with them, but I managed to make myself useful by helping keep track of the gear and corralling some of the watermelons they had bought at a truck stop outside of Marrakech.

When the bus arrived in Essaouira, I asked Abdellah if there would be room for me at their apartment. He had already described how it would be—apparently there was

a village that had been built to house employees of a state-owned mining company. The festival rented these apartments from the company for the week and gave them over to the visiting Gnawa troupes. Abdellah had pointed out that the invited musicians got hotel rooms. I helped carry equipment to the apartment, and it seemed clean and secure, so after Abdellah assured me that it would not be forbidden by the festival organizers, I decided to stay. Several weeks before at Dar Gnawa I had complained about the cost of the hotels, which had cost me around $50/night during previous stays. Abdellah thought that sounded reasonable, and I shot him a look that suggested my strong disagreement. (My typical target in Morocco was under $15/night.) The door of the apartment opened into a hall, which led to a large salon lined with banquettes, the cushioned benches that also serve as beds. There was a central courtyard, open to the sky, with a water faucet and a sink. The bathroom was next to the kitchen with the stove; the dining room had a cupboard with dishes, a table and chairs, and three more banquettes. The bedroom had a large double bed. There were keys for the dining room and bedroom, as well as a single key for the front door. Abdellah kept all the keys, so one of the younger members had to stay in the salon at all times to let the others in and out. I stood door duty a few times that week—there was a television with local stations to watch, and usually someone else to talk to.

Abdellah let me keep my suitcase and laptop in the bedroom, which he shared with his nephew Walid. Walid and his father Ahmad had come down from Youssoufia for the festival. Ahmad, Abdellah's older brother and a mining engineer, was staying

with friends in town, but Walid, 18 and awaiting the results of his recent "Bacs" test, wanted to spend time with his uncle and the other Gnawa. The dining room was the domain of Abdelkader, Khalid, and Nour Eddine, the three senior members of the troupe. The first thing they did upon arrival was to make a written inventory of the dishes, pans, and utensils on a sheet of paper. Abdellah witnessed the list in person and signed it. These men also did all the cooking and policed the younger guys. The rest of us slept in the salon, which led to some late nights. The apartment on the upper level was occupied by M'allim Hmida Boussou and his troupe. Apparently these two apartments were the only two in which alcohol was banned—"no Gnawa drunkards!" in the words of Abdellah.

I tried to shadow Abdellah as much as possible, but he had to go to some official functions that were open only to the m'allims and the invited musicians. He described these severely as "soirees," generous feasts where the wine flowed like water and respectable m'allims got drunk. Abdellah left early. He and the three senior members of the troupe also went to a practice session of around four hours with the invited musicians. I asked to go along, and at first it seemed like I would be able to, but at the last minute Abdellah asked me to stay behind. I was invited along to some official greetings with some of the other m'allims. They were all staying in the same village, but people were on different schedules, so visiting involved some coordination. One or more of the elder members would go out and check that the m'allim was in (I was along on a couple of these preliminary visits), and then we would go back and get Abdellah

and whoever else was around. We would go and sit and talk for 20-30 minutes, and then move on.

I also made it into a joint interview with Abdellah and Hmida Boussou, in the upstairs salon. A camera crew was there from 2M, Moroccan state television's premium channel, along with a reporter. Both m'allims were invited to play ginbri a bit for the camera; both played a bit and then passed the ginbri on. One young man from Hmida Boussou's troupe played a more energetic tune while others in the room clapped along. The camera zoomed in on Walid, who was swaying back and forth with his eyes closed. Neither he nor his father identified as Gnawa at all, but Walid's apparent "trance" so entranced the camera crew that they focused on him for a significant amount of time, a long cut. Because I was sitting next to Walid, I made it into the shot, and thus my image was broadcast on national television for a second or two, and they all laughed at me that evening while we watched. Evidently, one of the preoccupations of the journalists was to document the visual evidence of possession. When he was done playing the ginbri, the young man returned the ginbri to Boussou and kissed both Boussou and Abdellah on their foreheads. The journalist liked that so much that she convinced him to do it a second time, for the camera.

The most important part about living with the performers, however, involved the evening visits we received from other m'allims. As a "dry" apartment, we attracted the more pious of the Gnawa visitors, including Hammoud and his friend Abdeljalil from Marrakech. Hammoud was a m'allim, the other members told me, but he never held

lilas. Instead, Hammoud was the best ginbri maker in the country, Abdellah had told me previously, and Abdellah bought all his ginbris from him. On two separate occasions, younger members of Dar Gnawa told me that Hammoud was "one of the very best of men" (*min ni'amat al-rijal*). He had a full beard and the mark on his forehead of Muslim men who pray more often than the required five times per day. He spent many hours with us in the salon, playing and singing. His friend Abdeljalil was less obviously pious—he was clean shaven and had a rough way of talking, evidence of his childhood lived on the street. Both men had some connection to Meditel, the Spanish-owned telecommunications company that was state-owned Maroc Telecom's major competitor. Maroc Telecom was the official telecom sponsor, but Meditel had a small stage far down the beach. Hammoud and Abdeljalil were staying in an apartment farther away from the madina. They offered to let me ride with them back to Marrakech after the festival, and right before we left there was a problem with the landlady: Hammoud, a bit absent-minded, had forgotten his towel in the apartment, but the landlady wouldn't let him back in to retrieve it—she reported that it wasn't there, which suggested to me that they were not staying in a very reputable place. We left without the towel. Another frequent visitor to the Dar Gnawa apartment was someone they called "The Policeman" (*al-bulees*) a tall and formidable man with a large mustache who was a police officer and also a performer in one of the troupes. It was clear that he respected Abdellah a great deal—he had an amazing meal delivered to us one evening. The Policeman liked

to talk about politics, a topic that the rest of us were starved for, since politics was the one discussion topic that Abdellah discouraged among the members of Dar Gnawa.

I spent my mornings socializing with the Dar Gnawa members, typing up notes, and going in to the madina to an Internet cafe to check my email. In the afternoons I tried to catch some of the World Cup matches, but it was another bad year for that. A Gulf businessman had bought a monopoly on the broadcast of all games of the first two rounds to Arab countries. He was charging exhorbitant rates through his subscription satellite channel, so the bars in the larger hotels were the only places where the games were being shown in Essaouira. In 2002, if I one cafe was showing a game I didn't want to see, I could just go around the corner to the neighboring cafe. In 2006, I had to try to convince the bartender and other patrons that the other game was much better. My frustration was doubled because Ghana was in the tournament for the first time. I did go to the hotel bars, but I was careful to drink only soft drinks. Given where I was living, I did not want my breath to smell of alcohol, nor did I want it said that I had been spotted drinking beer! I spent my evenings accompanying Abdellah to whichever concerts he felt were worth attending. At night sometimes we slept early (by midnight), and sometimes we were up very late. One night a m'allim from Marrakech, Abbas, came with two members of his troupe, along with Hammoud and Abdeljalil. Abbas had not been invited to the festival this year, but he had been hired to play the Meditel stage. I was already asleep when they arrived around midnight, so I woke up and sat in my shorts and tried to wake up. They were in high form! They played, sang, and clapped

for hours, until 2 or 3 in the morning. I would clap along until one of my friends would stop me, because Abbas's two troupe members would launch into intricate rhythm breaks of handclapping, the loudest and most perfectly timed clapping I had ever witnessed.

Clearly, this visit to the Essaouira festival differed radically from the others. This time, while I did see Najib Sudani again (and felt vindicated when Abdellah had almost as much trouble understanding him as I did), I didn't find Ahmad again. The music shop was closed up tight, and I couldn't find my way back to his apartment. I asked a few people about him but nobody seemed to know where he had gone in the intervening four years. Additionally, in retrospect it seems I was much more aware of what was going on, even if I attended fewer public performances than ever before and remember being just as confused and overwhelmed as the previous two times.

Two broad images remain in my mind concerning this most recent experience. First, the festival does not just exist for the international tourists or even for the Moroccan tourists. For the Gnawa who come from all over the country, it's an intensely social and intimate time for them to see each other, socialize, and catch up. I remember joyous meetings in apartments, cafes, and on the street, not just as m'allims met each other again after five or ten years, but as members of the troupes met up again: The older ones swapped stories, and the younger ones met people they had been hearing about for years. I was walking with Abdellah when an old beggar stopped him and

kissed his cheeks. The old man started explaining who he was, and Abdellah remembered meeting the man's father on one of Abdellah's trips in the 1980s.

Second, the anonymity of the Gnawa stood out. When they had their costumes on, they were clearly identifiable as Gnawa, but in street clothes they were just nameless, and moreover dark-skinned, Moroccans. When I had walked back with him from the opening parade (*defile*) several days before, Abdellah had been in costume. As we walked, people saw Abdellah in costume, with his dark skin and white beard, and called to him. Some people came up to him for autographs or to ask to have their picture taken. Few recognized him as "Abdellah El Gourd"; instead, he was a generic Gnawa m'allim. But if they said "tabarak Allah" or some such polite greeting when they took the picture, Abdellah would respond in a friendly manner. However, he got increasingly tense as we walked on, especially as people started yelling at him, "Gnawi!" or "Saha Koyo!"—a Gnawa greeting that has been stereotyped through its use as the title of a Gnawa jazz group and their album. On more than one occasion, people just walked up to him and snapped a shot, or even posed for shots next to him without greeting or asking permission. He ignored these people and tried to keep walking, muttering "Garbage!" in English under his breath for my benefit.

Later in the week, when Abdellah was out of costume and walking around in street clothes with me and Abdelila, the youngest member of Dar Gnawa, he attracted far less attention. From my field notes:

> The night we went walking around (following Dar Gnawa's performance: me, Abdellah, and Abdelila), we kept meeting Gnawis in the crowd who were very excited to see Abdellah and gave him lots of greetings. No one else recognized him. The only time bystanders recognized him was when he was in uniform, returning from the defile. After we walked through the concerts and saw what was going on, we returned, but Abdellah wanted to get something to eat. (He had refused an ice cream cone that Abdelila offered because of his bad teeth—he can't eat cold things.) So we went to a milk shop, went in and sat down. As we were getting into the back, another customer recognized Abdellah, greeted him and embarrassed him, kissing him on the forehead. He tried to convince the other patrons that Abdellah was a m'allim. He just sat there silent, while the two young men talked about him in Berber. He translated into English for me, and Abdelila got the point too, so we ignored them.

The milk shop was on the main business street outside of the madina and far from tourist sections of town. We entered all the way into the shop and found a table as far from the street as we could. It seemed like Abdellah was trying to get away from all the notoriety. Abdellah had been honored but a bit embarrassed by the attention shown by Gnawa who were genuinely interested in getting to know him. This last show of respect, however, was not sincere—the man was just looking for attention, a fact that Abdellah could understand because he understood the Berber that the men were speaking to each other. It seemed to me that the Gnawa were a spectacle. Clearly, racialized media

representations, exemplified by the joint press conference, contributed to the means by which Abdellah's body became a spectacle. He himself contributed to this process as well—the means by which he was making his second career of musician and performer was a process of commoditization of the body of the Black Gnawa master. His identity, even his whole person onstage was subsumed under the title of "Gnawi," and he was paid well for this, at least for the part under his control. But I think at this point he was looking for something apart from such a taxing existence. He wanted to relax and enjoy ordinary life for a few minutes. If he was being greeted by respectful people who knew him or who shared friends with him, then he could be warm and welcoming back. But if someone just knew him as a celebrity and wanted to show him respect just so that person could gain some currency from the association, then Abdellah was less willing to cooperate.

ESSAOUIRA FESTIVAL: TOURISM AND GNAWA CULTURE

The Essaouira festival was a secular festival supported by private capital, the state, and the crown. It seemed to be designed to serve four major purposes: to attract foreign tourists, to attract domestic tourists, to attract MRE tourists, and to bolster the Gnawa popular music community and industry. A fifth probable goal—real estate development in Essaouira—cannot be discounted. Throughout my three visits, I was an international tourist on the lower levels. I did spend quite a bit of money on hotels on the first two visits, and I also spent a bit of money in restaurants and cafes on the third

visit as well. Such peripheral spending is necessary, since most performances are free. On the first visit I did buy tickets to some of the private performances, but these tend to be much smaller venues than, for example, at the Fes festival, where large crowds of well over a thousand audience members can be attracted to spend the equivalent of $10-$30 on a ticket. In contrast, most of the similarly priced private concerts at Essaouira seemed to seat no more than 100 people.

The Fes festival also scheduled some free public concerts, but these tended to be attended mostly by local residents, who number around 1.5 million total. In contrast, Essaouira's year-round population is closer to 70,000. The majority of the hundreds of thousands of concert attendees at the Essaouira concerts seemed to be, as a result, mostly domestic tourists. Since Essaouira is a resort city, the strength of its economy depends on packing the large tourist hotels as well as the many more modest ones. Although there are year-round events, the Gnawa festival is the largest. Due to plentiful rain and a stable market for phosphates, high economic growth rates persisted throughout the first half of the first decade of the twenty-first century. (Real incomes were static through the late 1990s, but incomes in 2006 were almost double those of 1997.) This growth in wealth led to increased consumer spending on leisure. The Gnawa festival benefited from the increased spending.

The third purpose of the festival, recouping the investments of the MREs, derived from a state-sponsored emphasis on developing the tourist market for Europeans of Moroccan heritage who are encouraged to return for longer vacation

periods to Morocco. Advertising during the summer sometimes seemed almost entirely directed toward these "foreign Moroccans," particularly banks encouraging the foreign workers to recycle their Euros through that particular bank. The "hard sell" was so emphatic that a billboard advertisement I saw in Tangier in September 2006 stood out:

Meme en Septembre

Vous pouvrez toujours

Compter sur nous

Attijariwafa Bank

The slogan "In September, you can still always count on us, Attijariwafa Bank" drew attention to the overwhelming mass of advertising targeting MREs during the summer season. The deictic pronoun "you" draws attention to the fact that all summer, a barrage of advertising had been unleashed in which "you" was understood to exclude all but the MREs. Now, in September, once again "you" could indicate ordinary domestic workers.

Finally, the festival had the goal of developing Gnawa popular music. In this regard portions of the festival operated as a kind of industry festival, like SXSW in Austin, Texas, which seeks to link individual musicians and bands with industry figures in A&R ("artists and repertoire") who develop talent and are tasked with "signing acts." More than once in 2001 and 2002, I was mistaken for a producer or talent scout. Upon hearing I was from Austin, working-class foreign musicians (usually European or Caribbean) immediately produced business cards and asked me to keep them in mind. I clarified that I was a student, but I promised to do what I could. Gnawa popular

musicians from the higher levels who had toured in Europe and the United States acted in this respect as models for those less experienced in collaboration, showing them how to play stages and talk to the media and to other professional musicians. One example of this modeling took place in 2006, when for the first time I saw members of the several Gnawa troupes who were playing the main stages "lead clapping." They would exaggerate the motions of the handclaps, with hands high over their heads, so that audience members could detect clearly where the beat was falling. Such efforts at socializing audiences into unfamiliar, complex, and new rhythms call to mind Paul Bowles' observation in 1946 that when White audiences at New York jazz shows attempted to clap along to the beat, their efforts usually resulted in "spontaneous desultory applause" (Bowles 2003b). Here I want to draw attention to the fact that in the audience, members of other troupes observed this maneuver of successful crowd control and learned how to do it themselves.

A related action of the festival has extended beyond popular music. Notwithstanding Abdellah's repeated claim that the festival is not about Gnawa culture, it has clearly had an effect if for no other reason than it has brought together Gnawa m'allims who otherwise would have been exposed to Gnawa styles and personalities from other regions on a much lower scale. Gnawa travel for numerous reasons, mostly related to career and family, and they also make pilgrimages and do some "holy wandering" as well (Hell 2002), but these contacts can be spaced far apart and be quite ephemeral, particularly outside of the Rabat-Marrakech-Essaouira circuit, and for more

marginal members of the community who can't afford to travel. The festival brought together the recognized leaders of the community, but it also subsidized travel and sociality for some of these more remote members of the greater Gnawa community—from the Sahara, from Oujda, from Asila and Fes. The "eighth member" of Dar Gnawa, the Tailor, was encouraged to do this by Abdellah. He was uncomfortable having Abdellah as a master, and perhaps the feeling was mutual. His presence at the festival was a sort of in-kind exchange, since he had spent months in sewing and decorating the new costumes that the Dar Gnawa troupe wore all summer. The Tailor's pay was an equal portion of the payment, and the opportunity to meet other Gnawa at the festival. He found on from Rabat who agreed to apprentice him; when the other members of the troupe returned directly to Tangier, the Tailor followed his new master to Rabat, where he spent two weeks, funded from his portion of the proceeds. He came to Dar Gnawa when he got back to Tangier, and he showed us his tiny ginbri given to him by his new master, the "training" ginbri of a young adept. In an operational sense (Turner 1982), the esprit du corps and conviviality of the Gnawa performers' village indicated by this story is far more significant than any of the other aspect of the festival.

In a second example, during the opening parade on Thursday one of the more elderly performers in the troupe of Ahmad Baqbou collapsed and died from a sudden, massive heart attack. This event introduced a subdued tone to much of the rest of the festival, at least in the Gnawa artists' village. The news of the death was kept from the audience, and more than one Gnawi grumbled about that—they felt someone should

have made an announcement and offered a tribute to the memory of the fallen performer. Within the Gnawa artists' village, however, the death resulted in many visits around. We made our rounds on the following morning. Ahmad and the senior members of the troupe had accompanied the body to Marrakech for the funeral and to grieve with the man's family, but those who were left received us and served us tea for a few minutes. As we visited around that day and on Saturday, the death was a topic of conversation, and we learned a bit more about the man and his family. It served to bind the community together more closely.

If pilgrims are tourists of a certain ilk, then my tourist adventures in Morocco can also be seen as pilgrimages of a sort. I attended two raves, four years apart: Dunes 2002 in Merzouga, on the sand dunes of Morocco's small portion of the Sahara desert south of Errachidia, and Rhythms of Peace 2006, on the beach south of the small tourist town of Asila, south of Tangier.

Chapter 8: Raving Fits of Giddiness: Electronic Optimism

We ride, ride, ride out across the stony desert. Not on camels, but in a Peugeot rental car, the merciless sun penetrating the white roof and threatening to bake us. The volume on the tape deck is all the way up as Jawad (all names have been changed) hits fast-forward and rewind, trying to find the short Surat al-Nuh, the Quranic chapter of Noah, among the other chapters that are being chanted by the young voice so aware of cadence and climax.

"Go back, you passed it!" says Khalid in Arabic, sitting on Jawad's right next to the passenger door. I slow down, thinking I've missed a turn, but he was talking about the tape. Jawad holds down rewind for thirty seconds, then presses play again.

"I love this part," he shouts to the back seat in French. "The reciter has very good rhythm."

In the back, three girls chatter away in French. Two of them are French, and the third is a Moroccan who has grown up in France. They're spending their vacation together so the Moroccan can show off her homeland. They decided to come from Rabat down to the sand dunes of Merzouga, just this side of Algeria, when they learned about the Gnawa rave.

DUNES 2002 IN MERZOUGA

We started that morning from a large tourist hotel north of Rissani, HQ for the rave organizers. I met up with Jawad and Khalid there, in a large group sitting around the pool and sharing some brownies while they recovered from lunch. This is the second day of the rave, so they had been dancing all night and had snatched a few hours of sleep back at the hotel. Jawad grew up in Casablanca, but his family comes from al-Hoceima, on the north coast of Morocco, where it's involved in the import-export business and in real estate. His Casa connections got him a free ride through the rave—he's here in an official capacity, a friend of the younger brother of the guy who's bankrolling the event.

"He paid for it?" I asked.

"Well, not by himself—he has investors, you know, in Canada. He's a producer. He took care of the international part from Montreal, the deejays et cetera, and his brother arranged things in Morocco."

After he saw that I had a car, Jawad had relegated the three British South Asian boys we had been sitting with to a van with all the others, taking along only his best friend and the three French girls. We had headed south, the quiet country road winding through the fertile Ziz Valley with its walled oases, dodging an occasional donkey cart and passing slow-moving traffic. Upon arriving in the dusty little town of Rissani, I had looked for direction.

"Keep going straight," Jawad had said, waving me past the signs that directed tourists to the ruins of the ancient city of Sijilmassa.

This section proposes a few alternative models for contact and collaboration between groups. It does this through the rubric of music, specifically trance music that circulates as capitalist commodity. Identities are constructed within capitalist consumption, and this consumption is also speculative. Trance can signify embodied experiences that are accessible to subjects; trance can also signify a commoditized bodily practice that can be paid for before the use value of the trance is realized. This line of reasoning leads us to consider the consumption of trance by subjects as they are reproduced under capitalism. First, I should point out that the terms of the exchange are hidden under capitalism. These terms are clear and open in non-capitalist forms of exchange like barter and plunder—as Mauss concluded, there is no free gift in a barter (gifting) system (Mauss 2000). In contrast, under capitalist (monetary) systems, there appears to be the "free gift" of profit (or surplus value), even though this free gift is not really free. Second, because the terms of capitalist exchange are hidden, capitalist subjects come to be more speculative than those subjects reproduced under non-capitalist exchange regimes. In other words, capitalist exchange encourages those involved to be more superstitious, because commodity and money fetishism leads them to expect profit. They want something for nothing. This argument helps to explain why particularly Westerners, but also increasing numbers of Moroccans, like to assume identities that relate to trance, even though they don't belong to the communities. They

have not put in the work—they have not "paid the price" for the blessing. According to Bertrand Hell (2002), initiation into a Gnawa community generally precedes and accompanies authentic possession, but often trancers want possession without initiation. As capitalist subjects, they rate value against a general equivalent (money), but they are blind to the real terms of exchange. As a result, they speculate in fits of giddiness.

Circulation can be subsumed under transportation. Here, the *trans* of trance refers not only to the transportation of spirits or bodies, but also to the transportation of ideas like "music" or "trance," their circulation among people in commodity exchange. As Kojin Karatani explains,

> Capital does not care whether it gets surplus value from solid object or fluid information. So it is that the nature of capital is consistent even before and after its dominant production branch shifted from heavy industry to the information industry. It lives on by the difference. And as the father of cybernetics, Norbert Weiner, suggested, information is originally nothing but difference" (emphasis in original; Karatani 2004:267).

Since trance as commodity might be considered properly as a branch of the information industry, a consistency remains in the structural relationship that places Gnawa music and Morocco at the forefront of capitalist development, and the Sahara Desert as intrinsic to that development. For Gnawa, Morocco, and the Sahara Desert, difference is a stock-in-trade. In the rest of this section, I consider how commodities of trance and identity circulate and are exchanged in a transnational economy of psychedelic trance.

Despite a historical and geographical emphasis on Gnawa music's African origins, trance remains a distinctive draw for audiences to Gnawa music, even in Morocco. Hell (ND) goes into great detail about possession. Here, though, the representation of the relationships between Gnawa adepts and the spirits who possess them, while by no means reducible to merely a tool of marketing, retains great power in attracting audiences to the music. In a very real sense, possession captures us and holds us captive. Our desire for possession mirrors our subconscious desire for commodities (Kapchan 2002a, 2002b, 2004a, 2004b, 2007).

Many of the consumers seduced by mystical trance come from Western Europe and North America, where the exotic paranormal has been a valuable commodity at least since the 1830s. A recent and distinctive evolution of this tendency since the late 1980s has been rave culture, which has long-standing ties to black European culture. In post-punk European popular culture, "colder" variants of techno were developed by Belgian and German deejays, but it took Britons, and specifically black Britons, to develop "warmer" breakbeat techno, influenced by reggae, punk, and hip-hop (Hesmondhalgh and Melville 2001). The expanded use of rhythm breaks in breakbeat music demands greater concentration from the dancers—during the breaks, they must be more proficient in keeping the rhythm going in their own bodies. The development of breakbeat music created an alternative movement within club culture nearly oppositional to the mainstream, since trance dancers had to pay closer attention to the more complicated rhythms. By the late 1990s, the stereotypical rave scene was centered

on the Spanish island of Ibiza, one of the Mediterranean Balearic Islands, where each summer hundreds of thousands of young Europeans gathered to celebrate hedonism and techno music in the numerous dance clubs. "Trance-dancing" of this sort is roundly criticized in Gnawa circles. Hell argues that a key feature of Gnawa practice includes laughter, which emphasizes humility through mocking both the self and the world of appearances. Each initiate is led to "take charge of his own destiny" (Hell 2002:362)—to read signs, listen to the spirits, and live comfortably in community. Gnawa possession leads initiates to become more fully human, to become conscious of their humanity. This result is directly opposed to that produced by trance dancing, which Hell characterizes as either "nothing more than a hedonistic quest for blurred sensations, or a phenomenon of more-or-less controlled depersonalization" (Hell 2002:362). At first glance it seems that such trance dancing, which occurs frequently in Gnawa touristic performances outside of Morocco (Kapchan 2004a) and at Essaouira, could be compared to dancing at raves.

In fact, however, deejays and dancers at the 2002 rave also spoke derisively of Ibiza. Psy-trance ("psychedelic trance"), the kind of music at the Merzouga rave, is known for its environmentally conscious approach to raving and its attention to cultural and social justice. With its "organic" sounds and emphasis on a mystical union with nature, psy-trance is related to Goa trance, an underground branch of electronica that developed within the hippy communes of Goa, India, in the 1990s (Benedetti 2001). These raves are typically held outdoors and in remote places, like deserts, beaches, and

forests. A similar North American psy-trance movement revolves around the Burning Man arts festival held each year in northern Nevada. From its inception in 1986, Burning Man was known only to adepts until the Internet popularized the festival and Wired magazine ran a feature article in November 1996, where I first heard of it. Although 35,000 people participated in the 2005 festival, Burning Man remained a "participation-only" event—no pure spectators were allowed, but rather all had to participate in some way. Organizers continued to ban monetary transactions, with goods exchanged only through barter and gifting; although the average ticket price was around $200, some participants paid more in order to subsidize lower-income participants (Burning Man ND). Similar to Burning Man after 1996, an internet-based network or community of psy-trancers maintained long-term, consistent ties between members. This network is implicated in capitalist regimes of signification through the leisure industry and eco- and ethnotourism, and it is mediated, moreover, through Internet sites. Nevertheless, the dancing here contrasts sharply from the hedonism of Ibiza and does not provide an exact opposite to Hell's conception of Gnawa possession practices.

Dunes 2002 was billed as a 'Gnawa Rave' in an email I received one Thursday, which included a website. I visited the site, found directions, rented a car, and arrived in Erfoud, a small town north of Rissani, late Friday night. The following morning I traveled on to the hotel between Erfoud and Rissani, where I paid for a ticket and got a wristband. I observed ravers sleeping in the hotel lobby. After lunch, I saw a group of Gnawa musicians packing up their instruments and costumes as they prepared for the

second night. They looked tired and seemed to feel a bit hostile toward the half-naked, dirty, exhausted ravers, dreadlocks askew, scantily clad, body piercings and tattoos prominently displayed as they snored, stretched across banquettes in the hotel lobby. I let the musicians be, confident I would see them again that night at the rave. I was eager to see how they played with electronic music.

When I pull up to the dunes with Jawad, Khalid, and the girls, everyone piles out and goes in search of friends. There is no sign of the Gnawa musicians or their van. The hostel is a square box of a building, two stories tall. Next to it, ravers are camping in a small tent city that extends right to the edge of the dunes. Behind the campground, the food and water courtyard spreads across a flattened part of the dunes. It has banquettes and low tables under low tents around the sides of a carpeted courtyard, and a kitchen at one end. Behind the food center is the rave courtyard, and over another sand dune I can hear the pounding of a generator. But the Gnawa are nowhere to be seen.

That night, through pounding rhythms and savage, primordial sounds, the wild and contorted abandon melts individual moves into corporate and corporeal grooves. As we face the sound, two small pyramids rise before us in the night. Each is constructed of three poles connected at the top and spread at the bottom, with white string arranged, a taut net across the ribs. A black light tube attached to one of the ribs makes the interlacing filaments shine and glow in the night. The towers shift and shimmy, casting an eerie blue glow over the courtyard.

Two opposing lines of squat black tents, each open on three sides, surround a courtyard paved with mats and faded maroon carpets. At the back end, a patchy cloth wall makes a barely tangible barrier between the interior of carpet and tent and the sand dunes rising outside. Across the front of the courtyard a larger tent stretches, the two light pyramids standing before it. Next to them, the speakers suffuse the yard with a sound so sharp and bold that it seems to penetrate even the lumber holding up the tents. At the front of this bigger tent a low table holds the electronic mixer huddled over by Rene, a deejay from Geneva. He's lanky and shirtless, his long dark hair held back by a loose ponytail and headphones. His small hands, lit by a small flashlight in his mouth, dance over the controls and cue up the next rhythm tracks during a break. His glasses reflect the red and green console lights.

Rene is satisfied. He takes out the flashlight and replaces it with a cigarette. The beat has never stopped pounding, but he's clearly off the hook for a few moments. He takes a long drag and turns to his companion as the clean-shaven younger man improvises a flute solo over the electronic mix. The melody hovers over the beat, anticipates it, then departs in a swirling arabesque of oriental scales. The fresh attack animates the dancers.

The young and beautiful creatures contort their trunks and wave their limbs. During a break in the beat, a girl in a bikini top sways up her two or three layers of ankle-length diaphanous skirting, the gossamer not quite concealing her shapely thighs. She swings her arms, holding in her hands glowing filaments that distort and exaggerate

the length of her fingers. Next to her a shirtless boy cavorts in wraparound shades, his slender chest and six-pack abs undulating above a dark happy trail down to his low-riding and baggy pajama bottoms. The kids are dancing close, but they appear entirely insensible to each other, each lost in a hidden and personal world of trance.

I never saw the Gnawa musicians again. As I drove the rental car over the mountains on my way back to Fes, I could only conclude that the lila had been cancelled. The following week, however, I was speaking with a friend, another graduate student studying Arabic, and I mentioned where I had been. He was astounded—he had also gone to Merzouga in search of the rave, but he had attended the lila instead of the rave. We had both left in haste and had failed to find out whether the other was going. While I had been looking for the lila and had been sucked into the rave, he had been looking for the rave and had stumbled across the lila. In his judgment, it was a typical tourist lila:

> The lila ... had a particular focus on money—specifically, obtaining financial gains through this particular production and repetition of whatever they were saying during the event. ... As far as reasons why the two were separate, one can only guess that the lila had religious meaning while the rave had debauchery as its intent and goal. ... Regardless of meaning, though, both events were organized for financial purposes in different ways. (Patrick Collins, personal communication, April 2006)

We can assume that the lila and the rave had been held two or three miles from one another, close enough so that those in the know could visit back and forth, but far enough away that undesirables from the rave would not be able to find their way to the lila. No doubt the Gnawa musicians shared Hell's reaction against the worst aspects of techno club and rave culture, which, it's true, can include hedonism, abuse, grandstanding, and deep irresponsibility. Perhaps the ultimately near-total separation between the rave and the lila gives evidence of negotiated compromises between the organizers and the Gnawa performers fearful of the association with rave culture.

NATURE AND CULTURE ENTRANCED

Such sensitivity on the part of the organizers would appear to be indicated by psy-trancers' concern for social and environmental responsibility and propriety. Nevertheless, such a compromise belies the long history of mutual accommodations and exchanges that have been made between blacks and non-blacks in North Africa and West Africa, tortuous and unlikely relations across divides much more fraught with danger and even death (see Chapter 1).

The Gnawa musicians were probably included in Dunes 2002 as a marketing strategy designed to draw Western tourists enthusiastic about African trance music. But their inclusion also likely signified the desire of organizers to help struggling Gnawa musicians find audiences through shared interests in "spirituality," a pattern in marketing Gnawa music more generally in Europe (Kapchan 2007). Perhaps the

ultimately near-total separation of the rave from the lila gives evidence of negotiated compromises between the organizers and the Gnawa performers fearful of the association with rave culture. Hell documents a major crisis that the Gnawa community has recently been undergoing, and he rightly identifies this crisis with the spirit of capitalist commodity exchange, which is embodied by the camel-footed she-demon Aisha Qandisha and results from individualist approaches to spirit possession (Hell 2002:314-315).

A second reason for the separation might stem from concerns over maintaining the integrity of local knowledge and performance traditions. In a jazz concert I attended in Houston, Texas, in the spring of 2001, pianist Randy Weston played an entire set with his quartet, followed by separate performances by two Gnawa troupes, one from Marrakech and the other one, Dar Gnawa, from Tangier (the first time I saw Abdellah, but I didn't meet him at the time). The boundaries between the three styles—American jazz, Marrakchiyya Gnawa, and Tanjawiyya Gnawa—were crossed only during the final number, a jam session involving all the musicians at once, with audience participation encouraged.

Nevertheless, to explain the continued speculation on future development of Gnawa world music, perhaps we can look to a common interest of both psy-trance and Gnawa, the natural environment. Gnawa masters are known to have special abilities to control nature. To illustrate this point, Hell tells of the founding of the zawiya at Tamesloht, near Marrakech: When the mystic healer Mulay Abdallah Ben Hsein

founded Tamesloht in the 13th century, he drove off all the wild animals living there. Avoiding the simplistic hagiographic interpretation, Hell notes the lesson: To live peacefully, people need the help of magicians who can drive away unknown supernatural forces. The ability of saints to expel or subdue dangerous and deadly animals "serves to draw attention to the fact that in Morocco, saints are considered as true masters of the invisible, uniquely able to have at their disposal the power to constrain spirits" (Hell 2002:257). Two economic elements are outside the control of capital, labor and natural resources. According to Karatani, "the capitalist commodity economy discovers its limit in those things that it cannot organize at its disposal. ... These are the natural environment (that agriculture seeks to organize) and human beings (the labor power that industrial capital exploits as commodity)' (emphasis in original; 2003:198). Interestingly, Karatani finds a solution to environmental pollution in the commoditization of nature, transforming what was previously seen as a 'free good' into a commodity through the use of 'green taxes' that include the cost of recycling waste materials into the cost of production (2003:283). Nature in the sense of natural resources is one of the two economic elements that are entirely independent of capital.

As we drove across the desert toward the rave, we were listening to a cassette of the Quran. Specifically, Jawad was interested in hearing the short chapter of Noah. As related in Hebrew scripture (Genesis 6-10), the story finds Noah on the precipice of an apocalypse. In his wrath at human sinfulness, God threatens to "destroy men whom I created and blot him out from the face of the earth, as well as the beasts, creeping

creatures and birds, for I am sorry I created them" (Genesis 6:10; Hurault 1990). Deciding to save the only person who pleases him, God commands Noah to build a large boat that will carry him, his family, and a selection of animals unharmed through the flood. The Quranic chapter (*Surat al-Nuh*) expands on the period just before the rain began to fall. Noah recounts his antideluvian efforts, prior to an impending crisis, to convince the sinful people of his day to turn from their idols and seek God. The language is beautiful:

> And behold I called unto them openly; and, behold I preached to them in public; and I spoke to them secretly, in private; and I said:
>
> "Ask your Sustainer to forgive you your sins - for, verily, He is all-forgiving! He will shower upon you heavenly blessings abundant, and will aid you with worldly goods and children, and will bestow upon you gardens, and bestow upon you running waters.
>
> "What is amiss with you that you cannot look forward to God's majesty,
>
> seeing that He has created you in successive stages? Do you not see how God has created seven heavens in full harmony with one another, and has set up within them the moon as a light and set up the sun as a lamp?
>
> "And God has caused you to grow out of the earth in growth; and thereafter He will return you to it: and He will bring you forth in resurrection.

"And God has made the earth a wide expanse for you, so that you might walk thereon on spacious paths." (Quran 71:8-20; Asad 2004).

Noah uses his best powers of description, trying to tempt his listeners to look about them and see the beauty and grandeur of the created world, and acknowledge the magnificence of its creator. Perhaps in the future, desert trances can accomplish this wonder free from the idol of speculation. In fact, I never heard of the Dunes rave being repeated—it appeared to have been a financial failure. Another rave I attended four years later, however, was decidedly more capitalistic, although this did not solve all of its problems.

PEACEFUL RHYTHMS IN ASILA

In 2006 I was living in Tangier and searching for "Dunes 2006" on the Internet to see whether I could return to Merzouga to see how the rave had transformed. I couldn't find an evidence to indicate that the Dunes rave was still operating, but a search for "psy-trance Morocco" led me to a rave being planned for the beach near Asila. Based on my experience in Merzouga, I was wary of being too much a tourist, since my budget by July was greatly reduced: My wife, by then five months pregnant, had just rented an apartment in Ohio as she prepared to return to her teaching job. The website instructed those interested to buy tickets online (in Euros) and meet in Tangier for a chartered bus (payable in Euros) to the site. I remembered the hotel "staging area" for Merzouga and the fact that people could hitch rides down to the rave, and I planned

accordingly. I rode the train to Asila and hitched a ride on a motorcycle-truck from the train station to the town. I walked around looking for ravers, but it was the height of Asila's tourist season and I couldn't find any strange-looking folk to ask for directions. So I caught a shared taxi back to Tangier and rented a small car for two days. The following day, Saturday, I set out again with the driving directions to the rave on the seat beside me. After a few mishaps, I began seeing signs on a small coastal coastal lane about five miles south of Asila.

The primary staging area consisted of a parking lot and an admissions hut on a hillside overlooking the Atlantic. I was trying to get a Moroccan ticket, since I had just received my residence permit for Morocco, and I could save around half the price, payable in dirhams. I talked my way through the gate and began down the tortuous track toward the secondary staging area. All of a sudden I saw a uniformed police officer walking next to a young man. They indicated they would appreciate a lift, and I picked them both up. The police officer, Ahmad, was from Tangier; the young man, Pedro, was a Mexican living in Barcelona. They spoke Spanish together, and I spoke Arabic with the officer and English with Pedro. We arrived at the secondary staging area, where the police had taken over a building. I parked there and walked the last mile with Pedro along the beach. We met two more police officers at a rocky gap on the beach, just prior to reaching the beach. We explained to them that we were going to buy passes from the office.

The rave area was on a broad section of beach with the stage back away from the water. We approached along the beach from the north. To the south of the stage was a group of semi-permanent structures that constituted the "official" vendors, selling water, soft drinks, and beer, and a large tent with concessions. The generator was behind those structures. To the north of the stage stretched a causeway of licensed concessions—both outside and local vendors. For example, a young German man and his girlfriend ran a juice tent. They subsidized their raving by traveling from gathering to gathering selling glasses of orange juice on demand for 1 Euro. In contrast, across from that tent was a restaurant run by a Moroccan family from Ksar el-Kebir selling roasted chicken and fish. Inland from the causeway was the tent village housing the attendees. At the end of the causeway was the official gate and a tent with officials, and beyond that was the rocky place two police officers were sitting. As we waited to get our passes, I learned that Pedro was from Michoacan, where he had attended psy-trance raves. He appeared to be in his late twenties. He had been living in Spain for three years—currently, he was working part-time in Barcelona in a restaurant and going to culinary school there. He wanted to be a chef. His English was very rusty, but functional. He had last attended a psy-trance rave in Portugal two years before. As we approached the rave and he heard the music, a smile crept over his face: "I haven't heard this music for so long!"

This rave differed from Merzouga in several ways. First, the attendees seemed to be more connected through the Internet to the larger psy-trance community. They knew

each other from other Mediterranean raves—most notably one in Turkey in the spring, to see a solar eclipse, and one two weeks before in Portugal. In Merzouga, the attendees had tended to be tourists in Morocco who had heard of Dunes through ordinary tourist networks. Second, the Merzouga rave had been better funded. It was better organized, more expensive, and took care of attendees more carefully, but it had probably also been less profitable. In Asila, there was more of a "market" atmosphere, with licensed vendors selling products for cash. Finally, the police presence was much more evident here. As I sat eating fish and chicken with Pedro and a fellow Mexican named Marco, we saw Ahmad arrive dressed in street clothes, hitching a ride this time on a tractor. I saw him and waved as he stepped down, and he came over and greeted me and Pedro, but he put his finger to his lips about his police identity—he was on an undercover mission, looking for "hard" drugs (cocaine, heroine, LSD, etc.).

I walked around and talked with attendees and took pictures and notes. I could communicate with nearly everyone using English, the lingua franca of the event. All advertising and signage were in English, but it served only for the most facile of conversations. For deeper communication, attendees resorted to their various native languages. I recognized Portuguese, Spanish, German, and French. Deejays were from the typical European countries (Britain, France, Germany) as well as Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Scandinavia, Brazil, Mexico, and Israel, and the attendees seemed to come from these countries as well. Sometimes they gathered around little flags planted in the

sand or attached to their clothing, little national circles marked off by ethnolinguistic unity and exclusion.

I had bought a day pass, good for two days since I bought it Saturday afternoon. I was able to buy the pass at the Moroccan rate, but I had to surrender my passport to be verified and held until I left. I told them I would be leaving that night to return to Tangier, since I didn't have camping equipment, and the woman promised to have my passport waiting for me at the primary staging area back up on the hill.

We were eating fish and chicken in the Moroccan restaurant when Pedro and Marco left abruptly. They had recognized the music of Swedish DJ Atmos—"He's very good"—and didn't want to miss his set. Pedro was at this rave because he knew one of the DJs, a Mexican named DJ Lamat. When one of the girls on Lamat's guest list couldn't come, he invited Pedro to take advantage of her guest pass, and Pedro spent a lot of time explaining these details to the organizers. In the end he went without a wristband, since he couldn't find Lamat. He knew Marco from a previous rave, and he also introduced me to some other Mexicans, who spoke better English than many of the other attendees. After finishing my chicken, I returned to the stage, but I couldn't find Pedro again.

Later, as I was preparing to leave for the night, I recognized one of the other Mexicans Pedro had introduced me to, and I asked her to give a note to Pedro with my email address, to follow up, in case I didn't see him again. The woman, whose name was Maria, asked me if I could drop her off in Asila. She had run out of alcohol, and she

really needed it to survive, she said. She was apologetic—she didn't smoke or use drugs, just alcohol, but she needed it immensely. Her friend, also from Tijuana, spoke better English—she had dated an American from San Diego and had lived there with him for several months. She tagged along as we walked back up the beach to the car, then drove up the track to the gate, back out to the road, and then to Asila. The women were tiny, young, scantily clad, and spoke no Arabic, so I stuck around and helped them find a liquor store, where they bought prodigious amounts of whiskey, gin, and wine. I then drove them back to the beach and dropped them off along with some others we had encountered walking on the track down to the beach. I returned to the main gate to pick up my passport. When it wasn't there I waited and fell asleep in the car waiting, and it was finally returned around 1 a.m.

I had planned to return on Sunday, but I was so tired after Saturday's exertions that I just couldn't make it back. I also felt a bit of disenchantment with this rave, since it seemed to maintain sharper distinctions between Moroccans (largely there in service roles) and foreigners (most of the ravers), with fewer MREs in attendance. I returned the car Sunday evening. Later that week, I read in the newspapers that there had been a major drug bust Sunday night, with all manner of illegal hard drugs confiscated. Lots of people had been arrested and the festival shut down. I felt good for Ahmad, who had seemed so hopeful that he would be able to find drugs and lawbreakers, but I was worried that some of the friends I had made might now be dealing with the Moroccan criminal justice system.

Asila formed a minor branch of the larger European circuit of psychedelic trance culture, which in turn depended on a line running from Tel Aviv to Goa. The network is dependent on Internet sites and discussion boards, but it is maintained through consistent reinforcement of participants at these raves, who maintain long-term social relationships, even though several years might pass from one meeting to the next. In this kind of case, it is useful to draw on Antonio Melucci's theory of "movement networks" (1985). Under the conditions of social organization since the 1960s, people may form loose movement networks around cultural symbols. These networks may or may not give rise to or transform into movements periodically at times of crisis; the essential point is that they encourage others to participate in these networks. These social actors may belong to multiple networks, they may be militant only partially and for a short period, and they tend to become personally and affectively identified with and implicated in the groups (Melucci 1985, 1996). Groups of people who identify with psychedelic trance and a spiritual, participatory approach to environmental activism identify affectively with the rave beat. This affective identification might lead to the formation of networks surrounding these identities, indicating some potential for a movement network. As Melucci points out, the medium of the network is the message they present: a new form of challenge to pre-existing cultural codes. The Asila festival was also a hopeful foray into maintaining cordial Jewish-Muslim and Israeli-Arab relations, since so many DJs were Israelis, and I assumed at least some of the ravers were as well, although I did not encounter any who identified as such when I was there.

Published scholarship on festivals tends to focus on festivals that are more central to a local community and that have been in place for much longer periods of time (Guss 2000, Brandes 1988, Noyes 2003). David Guss' vivid analysis of four festivals in Venezuela calls attention to the "pluralistic nature of festive forms" (2000:3), which he contrasts to the typical academic interest in the function of festivals to highlight folkloric particularity and locality in the service of national identity. The four festivals on which he chooses to focus his attention serve as sites of contention over racialization (Curiepe's San Juan festival), indigeneity (Caicara's Day of the Monkey), corporate influence in shaping "criolo" identity (British American Tobacco's campaigns in Caracas) and gendered performances of "mestizaje," in dances associated with the Tamunangue celebration honoring San Antonio de Padua in the state of Lara. The Gnawa festival fronts racialization and serves to develop Gnawa identity as a local marker of Africanness, even as corporate and state sponsorship of the Essaouira festival promotes Gnawa music as an alternative route to the competing modernities of Western pop culture and of pan-Arab pop culture.

The vision of the rave as a site of hedonism and the relaxation of social control calls to mind Stanley Brandes' close study of fiestas in Michoacan, Mexico (1988). Michoacan's intermediate location between Mexico's two largest cities, Mexico City and Guadalajara, has contributed to the vibrant nature of its festivals, which can swell populations of the festival towns by a factor of four. The raves clearly depart from the fiestas due to the fact that the fiestas find significant sources of funding from the local

communities themselves, while the raves are principally funded by outside capital, and local attitudes toward the raves are primarily extractive. Nevertheless, Brandes documents that influence of the state in developing festivals in Michoacan surrounding the Mexican Day of the Dead as a means of developing the tourist sector in Michoacan (Brandes 1988:88-109), which provides a parallel to the manufactured "musem" of Essaouira. Moreover, the raves also show evidence of the delicate balance between social control and license that Brandes points out in the Michoacan fiestas. Finally, since my consultant Pedro spoke to the vibrant life of the rave scene in Michoacan, perhaps there are some continuities between fiestas and raves there, continuities that also obtain in Morocco and in society more broadly.

Dorothy Noyes' exhaustive and ambitious study of the Patum festival in Berga, Catalonia (Spain) provides the third foil to my analysis of Moroccan festival and pilgrimage. The Patum festival is a local festival, continuous for four hundred years, that started as a Corpus Christi procession (May-June) but transformed over the centuries into a fire-festival with costumed Turks, knights, eagles, giants, dwarves, devils of various sorts, and a donkey/dragon that ended up circumambulating the central square amidst fireworks, smoke, and enforced participation. Noyes relates transformations in the Patum to social transformations, most recently from the paternalism of the Franco period to the multiculturalism of Euro-globalization, all within the context of a determination that the Catalan democratic rejection of both assimilation and violent separatism had become all the more fragile as the region de-

industrialized amidst factory closings and rising unemployment. At the end of her fieldwork, Noyes could distinguish two factions in Berga: the networkers, who wished to validate ties more strongly with international capital and tourist networks, and the *integristas*, who valued resistance to outside influence and recourse to exclusive, local control over the Patum.

Clearly, parallels exist on a superficial level between the Patum festival and the Gnawa festival with regard to networking vs. *integrism*e. As a matter of fact, my principal consultant, Abdellah El Gourd, himself kept one foot squarely in each camp, if he tended more toward the *integriste* side: He resisted attempts at power-sharing between himself and anyone else to define Gnawa culture, and he appeared to group capitalists, tourists, and drunkards under the same banner; at the same time, he remained a tireless booster of Gnawa culture to outsiders, keeping a rigorous and sustained touring schedule across Europe, North Africa, and North America year after year. And he never turned away anyone, no matter how annoying or clueless, from his evenings at Dar Gnawa, opening the door at 5 p.m. year-round and welcoming anyone in Tangier who could find it and wanted to jam with the Gnawa. He found an *integriste* ally in Hmida Boussou, whose only recording was an entire traditional lila recorded for the ethnomusicologist Antonio Baldassare and released in a five-album set, and in Mustafa Baqbou, who danced a more "networking" series of movements over his career, away from and toward popular music. Abdellah's choice to collaborate almost exclusively with well-known African-American jazz and blues musicians underscored his

determination to share his cultural wealth only at the highest levels through collaborations with performers in elite genres.

At the same time, while the Patum slowly collapsed toward the end of the 1990s, popular Gnawa engagement with the market increased at a dizzying rate, even as traditional Gnawa practice similarly declined (see Chapter 3). So there are correlations and divergences between the two. The Essaouira festival remains a tourist spectacle, supported by capitalists, tourists, and "drunkards."

FESTIVAL AND THE MEDIATION OF TRANSNATIONAL CULTURAL FLOWS

At one level, pilgrimages in Morocco are deeply religious affairs, and these pilgrimages continue to take place and to be transformed. The old pilgrimage centers continue to receive pilgrims and to wax and wane as their saints' baraka does as well. When I was in Morocco in 2002, I met an older American man in Asila who had been friends with a friend of mine in Marrakech in the late 1990s. The man, Yusuf, had been born in California to an affluent family but his father had died and they had lost everything. He had started traveling in the 1950s and 1960s to Afghanistan and began smuggling marijuana from Afghanistan to Europe. He converted to Islam and married an Afghan woman, but he had a terrible accident in the Swiss alps and had suffered a brain injury. His temperament changed and he descended into a violent depression, causing his wife to leave him. Finally he returned to God and his faith. He had moved to

Morocco because it was a Muslim country and it was cheap to live there of his disability and social security checks from the US government. He didn't speak very good Arabic, but he prayed more than necessary and practiced *dhikr* daily. He was seen as a very pious man. Our mutual friend told me that he died on laylat al-qadr, the holiest day of the year, later in 2002, when he was electrocuted in the shower. He had been buried in the cemetery in Asila. When I recounted his story in 2002 to a Gnawa m'allim visiting Dar Gnawa from Asila, he agreed that he had heard of Yusuf although he had never met him. The m'allim also confirmed that a few women did visit Yusuf's grave, evidence that new saints continued to arise and to attract pilgrims.

But musical tourism has transformed pilgrimages to reflect the pursuit of non-sacred commodities. A 2005 tourist brochure published by the state that I found in a travel agencies in Tangier confused religious and secular *musems*, using the same word for "traditional" musems and for music festivals. As a result, pilgrims have come to imbue some of these commodities with sacred force, snapping up recordings of Gnawa m'allims. As a result, what has become of Moroccan religious identities? I have presented this chapter as a pilgrim and a tourist of a certain ilk (Kapchan 2008:481), taking an identity that correlates in more than one respect with other tourist/pilgrims. Through our corporate and individual experiences we sought transcendent meaning, renewal and growth. We gained a measure of understanding, and we spent money.

CONCLUSIONS

> The *tbiqa* [incense brazier] still remains, and its trampling underfoot by the crowds. But each time I witnessed such a scene, an initiate would always come to pick up the glowing embers with his bare hands, without being burned. He would replace the embers in the brazier and calmly turn the pots right side up. And soon wreaths of *jawi* incense would once again rise up into the night. Invariably, the initiate would punctuate his intervention with a joke. A *bon mot* even as [the demon] Aisha Qandisha emerges? The initiate would seem to be directing a chuckle toward the heart of the crowd, even such an overexcited mob as this. (Hell, 2002:363; my translation)

My goal in this project has not been to direct a chuckle at the mob; my goals are much less ambitious and laudable than that. Nevertheless, I had hoped to document some responses to globalization that, while being no less serious about its effects, yet maintain a sense of proportion and even—despite fear, loss, and dread—a measure of joy. My intention has been to demonstrate how conceptions of race have informed popular cultural expressions in post-independence Morocco, and how these expressions have in turn helped to shape Moroccan modernity.

Section I, History and Ethnography Across the Sahara, focuses on race and slavery in relations between Morocco and the interior of West Africa. Beginning in

West Africa, I discuss possible origins for the Gnawa and other Black people of Morocco, including enslavement and forced migration. I argue that race has played a central role in popular culture and the public imaginary in Morocco. I also raise the possibility of non-coercive transformations in ethnic affiliation and offer origins for Blacks in Morocco other than forced migration. I emphasize the institution of slavery as it existed in West Africa and the changes it underwent in North Africa. Within Morocco, I point up the special role played by Black people in medieval records, asserting continuity in sustained representations of Blackness, and I outline resistance to enslavement, conquest, and oppression in Morocco. I conclude with a more detailed examination of scholarly and particularly anthropological research on the Gnawa, Morocco, and West Africa.

Section II, Enculturation in Modernity, articulates Moroccan aesthetics into global conventions and movements. It confirms that colonial experiences provided an incisive critique of modernism, leading to the dystopian visions of late modernism. The section proposes that metaphors of conversion and transposition can help elucidate transnational flows of music and culture. The metaphor of conversion raises the question of money and commodity, buying and selling; the metaphor of transposition implies musical practices such as collaboration. In all such interactions, race remains at the forefront as members of the New World African diaspora and their predecessors play a mediating role.

Finally, in Section III, Pilgrimage and Festival, I consider the role played by the international festival in mediating transnational flows of music and culture. The section returns to questions of "religion," this time challenging the "religiosity" of pilgrimage and the "secularity" of music festivals. I examine the role of two festivals in Moroccan society: the annual Gnawa festival in Essaouira, and much more occasional psychedelic-trance raves. My position was transformed over my three visits to Essaouira: from an informed tourist in 2001, to a somewhat jaded outsider in 2002, to a non-performing resident of the Gnawa village in 2006. Essaouira was revealed to hold numerous purposes in Morocco's society and economy, not least of which is its role in maintaining and sustaining relationships among Gnawa practitioners. My reactions to the psytrance raves were more ambivalent—I found the first one to hold tremendous promise for the future. The second one, however, less successfully disentangled itself from the storm.

As the storm blowing out of paradise rages on, there are numerous possible alternatives: to try to make sense of the pile of debris, to try to push the sound against the wind or to give in and let the wind carry it, to try to right the disturbed brazier and set the incense burning again. I have tried, in my way and at various times, to do some of these things.

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